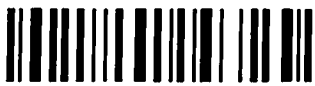

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BOMBAY BRANCH
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Travels in Siberia
by S. S. Hill
32919 Vol I

PREFACE.

THE following pages contain a narrative of incidents and adventures during travels which occupied three years, and were extended round the world. The reason why this particular portion has been selected for publication is, chiefly that it embraces some account of those countries concerning which the author has found the least genuine information current in Europe, and about which he has been most frequently interrogated since his return.

All the dates have been set down in conformity with the old calendar, because this is exclusively used throughout the Russian empire. But wherever it has appeared especially necessary to avoid error, attention has been called to the difference between the old and the new style. For the same reason, it has been thought advisable to use the thermometer graduated according to the scale of Réaumur, and in matters of importance to refer to the difference between this scale and that of Fahrenheit, which is in use among ourselves.

The apparently extraneous matter which will be found in some of the earlier chapters, has been introduced under the impression that the book would be rather read by those who are unacquainted with the more important institutions of the empire generally,

than by those who are familiar with them, and in the conviction that no portrait of the people could be fairly exhibited to a reader, who might not be acquainted with such of their institutions as in all countries must have more or less contributed to form the national manners and character.

The book appears, under the disadvantage of having been written during peace, and published after the virtual commencement of war with the country of whose inhabitants it solely treats. Yet, as its contents have no relation to changeable and moving events, it will not be mistaken for a publication adapted or intended to suit the present epoch better than any other time. If the style of its composition be found sometimes departing from that simplicity which is doubtless best suited to every mere narrative of events, this must be attributed to the author's great desire to impress upon his readers the true character of what he has endeavoured to describe.

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TRAVELS IN SIBERIA.

CHAPTER I.

JOURNEY FROM MOSCOW TO NIJHNI NOVGOROD.

North-east Suburbs of Moscow.—Views of the City.—Appearance of the Country near the Town.—Residence of a Boyar.—Fellow-passengers.—Vladimir.—General Aspect of the Country.—Nymphs bathing.—Road through a Forest.—Peculiar System of watching.—Forest Inn.—View of Nijhni Novgorod.—Arrival.

On the 29th July, 1847, I left Moscow by diligence for Nijhni Novgorod, accompanied by Mr. Marshal, with whom I had seen a portion of the two Russian capitals. Our immediate purpose, was to visit the grand fair so famous in the commercial history of northern Europe, which is annually held there.

After passing through several paved streets, we entered the most agreeable of the suburbs of the town, where we crossed one of the bridges of the river Jaousa, which enters the city from the north-east, and falls into the Moskva at a short distance beyond the upper walls of the Kremlin.

The whole of the vicinity of this stream in these suburbs exhibits the rarest objects of interest that are, perhaps, any where to be seen within the walls of a city. In passing the bridge, on the left hand appear many villas, which, with the buildings of several public

institutions, adorn the outskirts of the town; and on the opposite hand, upon the banks of the river on both sides, may be seen neat one and two story houses, painted generally white, with green roofs, and with gardens and shrubberies inclosed within railings, presenting altogether one of the most pleasing as well as novel views imaginable.

But if we were gratified with the novel prospect from this site, it bore no comparison with that which presented itself from the rise of a little hill which forms the left bank of the Jaousa. The whole city, crowned by its venerable Kremlin, and displaying its hundreds of gilded and gaily painted domes and cupolas, was here beheld at one view, and, with a foreground of beautiful villas and gardens, presented to us a spectacle unlike in character, and not inferior in interest, to any scene, not indebted to Nature for its grandeur or beauty, that it had been my fortune at any time to behold.

After passing the gate of the outer wall of the city, we came upon an open plain country. Here and there, at different distances, appeared groves of firs and birch-trees, and at intervals, fields sown chiefly with rye, which was in some instances already under the operation of the sickle. But the land seemed everywhere to be but indifferently cultivated.

Our first change of horses was at the small town of Bogorodsk, where we observed nothing differing from what had seemed to characterise all the towns of the inferior class that we had before seen. Soon after this, we passed a princely edifice, situated about half a verst from the road, upon our right hand. It consisted of a low long regular building, with wings united to the centre by handsome colonnades, and was painted with the usual lively colours of bright yellow and light green; and we afterwards learned, that it was the property of a boyar of large estates in this part of the country. The woods

about this building were tastfully planted; but the effect was in some degree spoiled, as is not unfrequently the case with similar edifices in our own country, by a pool of stagnant water in the foreground.

At eight o'clock, we stopped to take tea at an inn at the government post-station in a small village, where we had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of several of our fellow-passengers, who were seated in another department of the diligence, and among whom was Herr Kroff, a German commercial gentleman, from whom we afterwards received many civilities at Nijhni Novgorod.

Our road, upon the second day, was through a fine country, well wooded, and apparently better cultivated than any we had hitherto seen in Russia. At the distance of every eight or ten versts, the soil is here watered by a rivulet, from the banks of which the land every where rises gradually to the height of one or two hundred feet on both sides, and forms a continuous plain, sometimes sufficiently undulated for the traveller to obtain a tolerable view of the immediate country around. At one o'clock in the afternoon, we arrived at the city of Vladimir, which is situated in the midst of this productive plain. But we remained here only long enough to take a hasty repast.

This ancient city, since it ceased to be the capital of a grand duchy or principality of Russia, in the early part of the fourteenth century, has gradually declined in wealth and population. It is still, however, the capital of the government of the same name, and remains surrounded by a ditch and earth ramparts, though the number of its inhabitants does not now exceed 7000 souls.

We had no opportunity of observing more of the town, than that its principal street through which

we passed, was spacious, and formed chiefly of houses of brick and stone, but a very few of which were equal in appearance to those of the meaner sort in Moscow.

In the country that we passed through towards the same evening, we observed that the crops of every kind, were more forward than those in the western part of the district; and the rye and barley were generally under the sickle.

Our way, during the early part of the third morning of our journey, lay through a still finer and better cultivated country than we had yet seen, exhibiting a rich variety of dark groves, green meadows, and extensively cultivated plains. About two hours before noon, we passed the river Oka by a floating bridge; and about noon, we entered a dense fir-forest.

At the moment of reaching this forest, a little scene, slightly illustrative of the primitive condition of the Russian peasantry, afforded us a minute's amusement. There was here a clear and flowing stream; and it happened that the heat of the day, which was excessive, had attracted a party of fair bathers from a neighbouring village, who were sporting in the water and upon the river's banks, just as if this portion of the earth were still a paradise, and the daughters of the land quite unconscious of the necessity or convenience of clothing.

The road through the forest was gloomy, and relieved only occasionally by the presence of a party of wood-cutters. The forest had been the resort of robbers, and was now infested with bears and wolves, from which the roads however were kept tolerably free, by a systematic arrangement for watching, which was quite novel to us. At intervals are placed especial guards of the forest, who repose at the height of fifteen or sixteen feet above the ground, upon beds of fir-boughs laid on frames which rest upon four posts, and are protected from the

sun and the rain, by straw roofs or canopies, raised above them. In these frail watch towers, these guards are secure, at least from the attacks of any wild beasts during their hours of repose at night, and they can see the further by day, and judge better of the enemy's strength, before exposing themselves to too unequal a combat. Beneath their beds, or upon stands close at hand, rest spears, resembling boarding-pikes, ready to serve them to combat with the wild beasts when required.

In the centre of the forest, we found a post-inn, at which we stopped to change horses. As soon as we had alighted here, Mr. Marshal and myself approached the door, in search of some refreshments, while the rest of the party dispersed, we knew not whither. But such appeared to be the filthy state of the sole room of which the house seemed to consist, that after peeping in at the door, we could not make up our minds to enter; nor could we get anything to satisfy our appetites, which happened to be most inconveniently good. The inn seemed to be in the possession of three women, whose appearance and demeanour we thought presented the nearest approach to those of the most savage races of our diversified species, that we had ever seen in any country where a post-road was known.

When we found that we could get nothing to eat, and neither tea, nor wine, nor anything to make a refreshing drink of, we asked for some water. This, indeed, they gave us, but neither willingly nor abundantly; and it was so bad, that although we were very thirsty, we could not drink it; so we sat down upon some stumps of trees near at hand, and amused ourselves, by endeavouring to scold our postilion for not having told us on the way, that we were to-day to pass through such a destitute country. But this was not just; for it was our part to have made inquiry concerning the accommo-

dation upon the road, and not his, to have cared for anything but his own necessities and those of his horses.

We were not however to starve, and good was in store for us, of which we had not dreamed, and which our impatience scarcely deserved:

> "Many dream not to find, neither deserve,
> And yet are steep'd in favours."

At a moment, while we were trying to soften the hard hearts of the bad specimen of the *beau sexe* at whose mercy we seemed to be, and who we were convinced had some milk, from having seen a cow in the wood, our travelling companion already mentioned, who was well acquainted with the country, and who had removed with all the other travellers, from the dirt about the house, to the wood upon the opposite side of the road, and made a fire, suddenly summoned us to come and partake of cold fish-pie and hot tea; and we had now a famous feast.

As soon as all our appetites were satisfied, we continued our journey; and, at five o'clock in the evening of the same day, we came in sight of the place of our destination.

The town of Nijhni Novgorod, as we approached it, appeared before us, situated upon elevated ground, upon the south point at the confluence of the rivers Oka and Volga. But the fair is held upon the left bank of the Oka, at about a verst (or three-quarters of a mile) from the point at which its stream unites with the great river of Russia, and immediately opposite to the busier portion of the town, to which its site is connected, at this season of the year, by a floating bridge.

We had to pass through a part of the fair on our way to the town. And what we now thus accidentally and prematurely saw, did not give us a very favourable impression of the character of this curious place of ex-

change. We saw nothing indeed but lines of rough sheds, enveloped in a thick cloud of dust, raised by the men and beasts of burden which were moving from place to place, and which was not a little augmented by our heavy vehicle and the six horses that tramped before it.

My companion expressed his disappointment very strongly, at our having made such a journey to see, as it appeared, a parcel of half wild sheep-skin clad fellows, engaged in exchanging inferior objects of commerce, in a cloud of dust almost too dense to leave the men and their beasts visible at the distance of half a dozen yards.

After crossing the bridge, the diligence stopped, and our German friend left us, and we entered our hotel, where we were fortunate enough to obtain two rooms which were connected by a door between them. We found the windows of both closed; and we were told that we should by no means open them, as the rooms, if we did so, would be instantly filled with dust, of which a dense cloud was even here floating at all heights in the air. Finding, therefore, the heat oppressive, we threw off our coats, and seated ourselves upon our beds to enjoy a little repose.

We had not, however, been many minutes at our ease, before we had a strange visit of congratulation at our safe arrival. While we were calmly talking over the incidents of the journey, with the door between our two rooms standing open, Mr. Marshal's door was violently struck and suddenly burst open, and a gentleman in shirt and trousers rushed in, and with an English hurrah! and the phrase, not less especially English, "D——n it, how are you, my fine fellow?" accompanied by the maddest gestures, greeted my friend and congratulated our arrival.

Our welcome visitor, proved to be Mr. Wilkinson, a young commercial gentleman of Hull, who had been

acquainted with Mr. Marshal at Moscow. He had left that city some time before us, with a Russian servant and interpreter, and had been waiting in the expectation of receiving letters that were to be addressed to him here. And for the want of some occupation, or of a previous training to enjoy or endure solitude in a crowd, he had fallen into a state of *ennui* that he found almost insupportable. But while he was in this condition, as he described it to us, and reposing upon his bed, his servant had seen us alight from the diligence, and perceiving that we were Englishmen, had inquired of the conductor what were our names, which, as soon as he heard, he carried to his master, who at the name of Marshal, started from his bed, and hastened to pay his friend this congratulatory visit.

CHAP. II.

NIJHNI NOVGOROD.

Origin of the Fair.—The Races which inhabit Russia.—Basis of Russian Nationality.—Consecration of the Fair.—Procession.—Effects on the Multitude.—General Aspect of the Fair.—Government House.—Buildings of the Fair.—Arrangements and Classification of Merchandise.—Persian Ships.—Remarks on the moral Effects of the gathering.—Amusements of the Fair.

THE celebrated fair which is now held at Nijhni Novgorod, dates its proper institution from the year 1648, at which epoch it was established at Makarief, about fifty miles lower down the Volga than the site upon which it is at present held. In the year 1816 however, upon the occasion of the destruction of its buildings by fire, it was removed to its present site, where it is less exposed to the annual inundations of the great river, which had continually threatened its destruction while it was held at Makarief. Since this time, the encouragement of the government, and its admirable position in the very centre of the vast inland navigation of the empire, have raised it to be, probably, the greatest place of exchange of merchandise actually exhibited, upon the face of the globe.

But before we mingle with the busy throngs at this great gathering of the commercial world, it will be as well to make a few concise remarks concerning the races which compose the Russian people.

The Russian empire is inhabited by a number of nations and tribes of different origin and language, and of various degrees of civilisation, from that of the refinement attained by a portion of the Sclavonic race, differing in nothing from that of the most advanced

people in Europe, down to the condition of the half wild man still roaming over the Siberian deserts, and subsisting by the use of the bow and arrow. Nevertheless, all the seemingly distinct races, which we find settled, or following still their pastoral or nomadic lives, between the Ural mountains and the western districts of the empire, appear to derive their origin from two sources—from the great Caucasian family, and from the Mongolian tribes. From causes however, the details of which belong to the history of barbarian conquests, to that of constrained and voluntary emigration, and to the effects of manners morals and customs, upon the increase and decrease of numbers among particular races, the proportion of the population of Mongol origin, which was once considerable, is not now supposed to exceed a hundredth part of that of the entire empire.

The portion of the population belonging to the Caucasian family, inhabiting Russia Proper, has been divided, and probably very justly, into three branches, the Sclavonic, the Thule or Finn, and the Tatar. And it is with tolerable exactness ascertained, that the first of these, the Sclavonic, compose about nine-tenths of the whole of the population of Caucasian origin in the empire. The people of this race are, however, subdivided into Russians properly so called, Lithuanians, Poles, Lettes, Wallachians, and Servians, the Russians of all these being so greatly predominant as to compose about two-thirds of the population of the empire, or, amounting to about forty millions of souls. Those, indeed, of this branch of the grand Caucasian family, may be considered to compose the more solid portion of the entire population.

In a word, the true Russian nationality is formed, like our own, from the amalgamation of a variety of races, of which one chiefly stamps the character and shadows

the destiny. Just in the same manner that all the races that successively settled in Britain, have mingled the elements of their character, only to modify that of the Saxon, it is evident, that all the blood of all the races that have settled in this empire, will finally be confounded with, and only modify that of the predominant branch of the Sclavonic race of the grand Caucasian family which has given its name to the country and its inhabitants.

We found, on the morning after our arrival at Nijhni Novgorod, that we were just in time to witness a religious ceremony, which is in usage, of consecrating the waters of the river before the proper opening of the fair. The ceremony cannot fail to interest the stranger, from the importance which is attached to it by the Russians. Indeed, until this service is performed, although there is a great deal of business previously transacted, the fair is not, in a religious, or truly Russian sense, deemed lawfully open; and, all prior transactions are considered by the Proper Russian merchants, as such only as Jews and pagans might be pardoned for being concerned in, and as hardly entitled to success.

We breakfasted early; and under the charge of our young friend, whose ecstasies at our arrival were now calmed down to more sober joy, we recrossed the bridge over which we had passed on the preceding day; and turning upon our left, we made our way across an open space strewed with iron in every form in which it is made an article of commerce, and with such other coarse goods as pottery, and ropes and hides, to about half a verst above the bridge, where the crowd was gathering to witness the ceremony above mentioned.

Upon arriving near the place where the consecration takes place, we found great preparations made for the occasion, and some thousands of people assembled. About fifteen or twenty yards from the bank of the

river had been erected a pavilion set on piles, and connected with the shore by a railed gangway, and probably large enough to hold about a hundred persons. The bishop of the diocese, who was to perform the ceremony, was not long before he made his appearance with a numerous retinue. The procession advanced from what seemed the centre of the fair, through a dense multitude, formed of the votaries of commerce from many nations, and of every grade, which divided and left an alley open, by which the priests with all the gorgeous symbols of their religion, approached the river. The bishop carried in his right hand a cross, and was preceded by about half a dozen other priests, one of whom bore a large crucifix, and followed by several more, and after these by a train composed of the civil and military officers, including his excellency the governor of the department, to which was added a host of the inferior orders of the officials from the churches; and there were also two ladies in the procession.

Arrived at the river's bank, the whole party in regular order, crossed the gangway to the isolated pavilion over the stream. We would have followed them; but even among such a wild-looking set of fellows in sheep-skins, of which the crowd for the greater part consisted, our most respectable appearance was not sufficient to gain us admittance. However, we contrived by clambering up a pile of bales of merchandise that was near the water, to obtain a tolerably good view of the little holy place, and of the ceremony of the consecration which now took place.

In the centre of the platform of the pavilion was left an opening resembling the well of a fishing-vessel, with a low railing around it; and between this and an outer railing, the parties that had composed the procession now stood, the priests generally on the inner side.

The bishop held a book of prayer open in his hand; and from time to time, water was drawn from the stream, and received certain especial benedictions, by prayers accompanied with the sprinkling of incense.

This was all we were able to observe of the act of consecration, by which the Volga and all its tributaries were sanctified, and every thing that floated, or was to float upon their thousand streams, on its way to the fair, or on its passage hence, whether the property of Jew, Turk, pagan, or Christian, was equally blessed and made lawful for the most pious Russian to purchase and deal in. But a scene followed, which was more open to the observation of a stranger, and was well calculated to impress us with the truth of opinions which we previously entertained concerning the lively and sincere piety of the people, however different may be the form in which it is shown, from that in which we are accustomed to regard acts of faith and religious exercises among ourselves. We had, before the ceremony commenced, observed a party of the police set to work, to drive some of the multitude out of the river, in which they had been standing immersed almost up to the middle; but we did not know the reasons, either for this, or for the love of these good people for the water, by standing in which they could see no better than from the shore, until the mystery was now explained. At the moment the procession wholly gained the shore upon its return from the pavilion, there was a rush from all sides into the river, every one being eager to dip himself as quickly as possible in the waters of the freshly consecrated stream. Nothing could more resemble the bathing of a party of pilgrims at the Jordan. The haste, however, of the pilgrims of the Oka, was much greater than that of those of the holier river. Some, in their eagerness to get holy water enough, and perhaps afraid that the virtue of what was now

sanctified might too quickly depart, yet fearful of getting beyond their depth, after dashing in, stopped as suddenly, and stood up to their knees in the stream, and bending forwards, threw water upon their heads with their hands, and splashed and paddled about, more like ducks in a pond, newly awakened from sleep, than like wholly terrestrial bipeds; while the more courageous, or more pious, proceeded and stood immersed up to their chins in the water. Others, less eager, or perhaps less regarding the quantity than the quality of the purifying element, formed themselves on each side of the walk of the procession, where several of the priests, who carried large vases of the water more immediately blessed, and such little brooms as are used in the churches for a like purpose, dashed the holy fluid about with a prodigality that nothing but its plentifulness might excuse. We ourselves, too, were at this time among the crowd; and we enjoyed as much of the sacerdotal bounty as might have been less agreeable upon a less holy occasion.

Similar ceremonies, for the sanctification of everything, were performed upon a comprehensive scale throughout the fair. But the merchant that occupied the dwelling which was nearest to the place at which the waters were consecrated, was entitled, upon the occasion, to a double privilege, on account of the position which he enjoyed. His apartments, into which the priests entered, received the greatest quantity of the sacred water which all, in larger or smaller proportions, shared, and, he was favoured, to the full capacity of his rooms, with the company of his friends, whom he entertained at a Champagne dinner. The whole day was, in fact, devoted to these consecrations. From the palace of the governor of the department, which stands in the midst of the fair, to the meanest shed, all were sprinkled with the consecrated water. Every article of

merchandise and of food was blessed, until nothing remained unholy. Thus the coffee and sugar which we afterwards took for our breakfast, and the meat, but the fish especially which swim in the consecrated stream, upon which we dined, and the tea that we took in the evening, as well as our bowl of punch, if we thought proper to finish with this, were all holy.

It should be remarked here, however, that this disposition towards making everything sacred, is a sentiment peculiarly interwoven with the Russian character, and, that the ceremony which we have just seen, is but such as takes place everywhere, with something or other for its object, upon a great scale, periodically, but also upon a smaller scale, continually. The rivers are blessed every where, as they begin to swell in the spring, that the sacred water may render the land more productive. The fruits of the land also receive the same blessing when in the blossom, that their growth may be accelerated, and again at maturity, that they may nourish those who partake of them. The great consecration of to-day was to render holy the fruits of industry and the produce of art, as well as to sanctify the bargains and dealing of those who came to transact business at the fair. And just as the cultivator of the soil looks for the blessing of Heaven, through the sanctification of the Church upon the fruits which are raised by the sweat of his brow, so the merchant hopes, by the same favour, to see his dealings thrive and his purse replenished.

We did not follow the religious party any further, during the performance of their pious offices, but proceeded to take a first general survey of the fair.

We walked directly from the water side, towards what appeared to us to be the centre of the great place of exchange. After passing by heaps of the coarser description of goods before mentioned, between the

river and the first line of the sheds, and crossing the ends of several passages and alleys, formed by temporary stalls, and shaded from the sun by awnings across from the roofs of the sheds, we entered a great square, which forms the most open, but not the busiest quarter of the fair.

The entire side of this open space, is formed by one of two fronts of a handsome stone building, the centre part of which is occupied by the military governor of the department or government of Novgorod, at this time the Prince Urasoff, and the wings of which contain the different public offices, with the residences of several of the especial officials for the time of the duration of the fair. The remaining three sides of the square are occupied chiefly by shops for the sale of goods by retail, and are ornamented by colonnades. In the centre of the grand public edifice, a broad double archway, supported in the middle by buttresses, conducts from the open square to the inner and more important lines and alleys of the fair. Within this archway, also, there are a number of stalls appropriated, for the greater part, to the sale of valuable and fine goods, chiefly by retail; such as Persian shawls and gowns, and Chinese silks from the East, and trinkets and jewellery from the West. The grand staircase, leading to the governor's apartments in the palace, is also here, as well as the entrance to several of the public offices, and that to the grand *restaurant* of the fair.

After passing the archway, we came into the very centre of this grand deposit of the exchangeable produce of half the nations of the world. Great order and regularity, in the plan of the buildings for the accommodation both of the merchants and of their stores may be here remarked. Immediately opposite the centre of the governor's palace, on this side, a double line of low stone buildings with colonnades, form a grand broad

way which is called the centre alley. This runs through the chief seat of all the great transactions of the fair, and terminates upon another square, which has its upper end formed by the national church, and one of its sides by a mosque, and the other by an Armenian church.

Upon each side of this main thoroughfare run six other lines of buildings, equally substantially constructed; and from the square proceed lines crossing at right-angles all the lines that run parallel to the grand alley.

The grand alley, is appropriated chiefly to the sale of goods by retail; while in the lines which run parallel with it on both sides, are deposited the cloths, furs, cotton and other manufactured goods, which form the great staples of the produce of the Christian nations. But the lines that cross these, form the deposits of the Chinese, Persian, Buchara, and Tatar merchandise, which is indicated by their style of construction and decoration.

In these grand divisions of the fair, every line, or some portion of it, is appropriated to the deposit and sale of some particular description of goods, such as custom or convenience has classed under the same head. In the fair are found all the more important productions of the East and the West, and the North and the South. Here are exchanged the produce of the industry of Western Europe, improved by the advance of the arts, for the furs of Siberia, Kamtschatka, and even Russo-America, and for the works of pure human labour from Persia, Bochara, Tatary, Asia Minor and the mountains of Turkestan, and for the silks and teas of China. Here may be met the merchants and their assistants in the various national costumes of all these distant countries, except China,

the merchants of which country are represented by the Tatars.

This substantially built part of the fair, does not include above half the edifices of all sorts, which compose the great commercial depository. The rest, however, consist almost wholly of large temporary sheds, which are necessarily removed after the season of business, to avoid the inundations, from which even this site of the fair is not wholly secure, and by which they might otherwise find their way to the Caspian Sea. On some of the stone buildings we were shown the mark of the last inundation, at about seven feet from the ground.

The whole of this great area, except the side by the river, for the better protection of the goods against fire, which may not be brought in any form into the fair, is surrounded by a wide canal in the form of a horse-shoe, beyond which, especially on the side below the fair, in respect to the course of the river, there are houses for refreshment and entertainment.

Among the scenes exhibited at this great concourse of nations, not the least attractive to the stranger from Western Europe, is that which is presented by the shipping on the river. The breadth of the Oka, is here about the same as that of our famous Thames at London; and below the bridge above-mentioned, lie clustered all the ships and smaller vessels from the Caspian Sea, and all the craft from the trading and manufacturing towns which lie upon the Volga and its tributaries, throughout the governments north of Novgorod to the Valdai hills, which cross the country between St. Petersburg and Moscow, and to the mining districts at the very base of the Ural mountains. The ships of the Persians, of which there was a fair proportion, were the largest, and formed the most picturesque objects. They reminded us of the pictures in our ancient folio editions of the Greek and Latin

poets. We noticed one thing, however, that I do not know that any artist has found sufficient authority for introducing into any pictorial illustrations of the ancient poems. On each side of fearful beaks which form the prows of these vessels, was painted an immense eye, in which the passion of anger was in some cases so admirably expressed as to be well adapted to excite terror. Whether this is intended to aid the Persians in their wars, by inspiring their enemies with fear, or, as is more probable, to terrify some evil spirit of the waters of the Caspian, whose renown has not reached us, though I visited several of the ships during my stay at the fair, I could not learn.

We spent the remainder of this morning, in strolling about among this peaceful gathering of the commercial representatives of so many nations of the earth, assembled to exchange the superabundance with which nature has favoured some, for what industry and advance of the arts have produced in others. It seemed like a great council of all nations, tongues, and people, met together to combine the interests and cement the union of mankind, by making men of all lands depend, like the departments of a great state, upon the common efforts of the whole.

In the course of our walk, we called upon our late travelling companion, and some merchants to whom we were severally addressed. We found them all fully occupied with their affairs, and our visits were therefore upon this occasion very short. But on the same evening, we received already a visit from our German friend, who came politely to offer to show us a different phase of the great gathering of the nations, from that which we had seen in the morning.

As it was now more than two months past the summer solstice, when the time of leisure in the evening, in the 56th degree of latitude, is beginning to lengthen, it was

not wonderful, that the amusements of the world, with the world's commerce, should have found their way to Nijhni Novgorod, and have established themselves among such an assemblage of people of so many nations and of such a variety of customs, manners, and tongues. Accordingly, there were singers, dancers, and musicians in abundance, and indeed, all sorts of contributors to pleasure, that require no particular idiom to give expression to their note of enjoyment. One house, under the direction of a Frenchman, was said to have no less than 500 fair inmates, chiefly from Western Europe, all trained to the several arts which relieve the tired senses between the hours of business and of sleeping, and tend to make sleep itself the more refreshing, and without the aid of which, one half of mankind might die of *ennui*.

I shall mention only one of the houses, to partake in the amusements of which our friend took us this evening, convinced that a further description of what is to be witnessed in this way upon the banks of the Oka, is not among the indispensable obligations of the most faithful narrator of the incidents and impressions of travel in any land.

After crossing the canal or ditch above mentioned, we came into what may be called one of the suburbs of the great commercial citadel, where we found promenades and *cafés*, which might almost remind a stranger of the houses and walks of the same description in the Parisian Champs Elysées; and we entered one of the *cafés*, into which we were attracted by the music. Upon ascending to the first floor, we found an extensive room, elegantly furnished with everything inviting to the stranger. Unlike houses of the same kind almost everywhere else, instead of the number of little tables usually distributed about the room, there was here one long table with benches upon both sides. Upon each side of the

room, there were also two rows of benches, placed one above the other. Upon the upper of these, were seated with their feet upon the lower, several little parties of fair musicians apart from one another, with harps and other stringed instruments in their hands, and dressed in the costumes of the several countries from which they came. Thus, under the same roof were gathered the beauty and talent of Greece, Italy, Germany, Holland, Southern Russia, Switzerland, and other countries, all of course Christian; for the privilege which men enjoy, of converting the daughters of their several countries into portable machines for the amusement of the world, only belongs to Christian lands. The visitors, however, who were, of course, all of our own sex, were not confined to those who dwell within the limits of Christendom; but were from all the lands save China, which had sent forth of their abundance to Nijhni Novgorod.

Some of the good company with whom we took our seats, sat sipping coffee, and some tea, and others a stronger beverage. Some puffed the Russian chiboock (which is like that of the Eastern nations) with their beverage, and others the meerschaum of the Germans, or the cigar; while others were dozing over the mixed melody of stringed instruments, not scraped chord against chord, but touched by light fingers and accompanied by the choicest voices. It was a scene amid melodious sounds, which to those whose eyes were open, and whose ears were not closed, afforded the prettiest prospect, amidst the most entrancing sounds, that might be met with any where within the confines of four walls.

CHAP. III.

NIJHNI NOVGOROD.

The Governor Prince Urasoff.—Town and Kremlin of Nijhni Novgorod.—Rambles in the Fair.—Tatar Princes.—Tea.—Banks of the Volga.—Tatar Scenes.—Causes of the superior Tea we get in Russia.—Making Purchases.—Jealousy of the Merchants.—Visit to Government House.—Application for Permission to visit Siberia.—The Prince's Idea of England.

THE next step which we took out of the ordinary course of our observations at the fair, was to wait upon the governor, Prince Urasoff. We had previously called at the government house, but finding his excellency engaged, we had merely left our cards. We had now, however, the favour of an interview with the representative of his sovereign for the grand government of Nijhni Novgorod. His excellency, who was in uniform, received us with great politeness; and when he found that we were not at the fair for objects of business, he expressed surprise at our wandering so far, for the mere gratification, as he supposed, of our curiosity, while we had so much of the beautiful in nature, among our own hills and dales, where we might, he thought, at least pass our time more agreeably than in travelling in Russia.

After we had, in answer to this remark, expressed to the prince our gratification at finding that he knew something of our country, we thought it due to the thousands of our compatriots abroad, to whom this remark might apply, to say that we believed that everything in all countries conveyed some fresh impression to those who saw it for the first time; and, that we thought, therefore, that we always returned to our island

home, after a journey in any country abroad, with at least some addition to our previous stock of knowledge.

Our interview with the governor upon this occasion was short. But on the same day we took a droschky and drove to the Kremlin, or citadel common to all considerable towns in Russia.

As we ascended the hill which leads to the gate of the kremlin, we saw an instance of *goître* in a peasant woman, who, as I afterwards ascertained, was a resident of the place, and lived in the upper town. The case was such, however, as would scarcely have attracted notice in Switzerland; and it was the only one I saw during my travels in Russia.

We found the citadel built upon an elevation similar to that upon which the Kremlin at Moscow stands. It is an ancient fortress, little remarkable for strength, yet surrounded by high walls with seven towers irregularly formed, but now in a state of decay. The towers which overhang the cliffs of the Volga and its tributary, command a fine view of the fair and of the great river of Russia, with a vast plain stretching out to the horizon in the direction of the north and east. The day was bright, and several vessels with every one a single mast and one enormous square sail, which is the ordinary rig of the craft that navigate the waters of the Volga, were slowly stemming the current of the noble river.

There are several churches, the palace of the governor, and some public offices within the citadel; but there is little to engage a stranger's attention, except a monument in bronze of Menim and Posellarsky, similar to that which is to be seen in the *Ketai Gorod* at Moscow.

We left the fortress by the gate which leads to the elevated portion of the town; and after driving through the principal streets in this direction, and alighting to

visit a little public garden scarcely worth attention, we returned to the lower town by another route, which brought us down a declivity in front of the fair.

After again crossing the bridge, we spent the rest of the day in driving through the lines of the fair that were most frequented; and at sunset we mingled with an audience assembled to listen to the music of a military band playing in front of the palace. But whether the more dulcet notes and their accompaniments of feminine voices and the pretty prospect, within the *cafés*, were more attractive to the traders at the fair generally, or whether it was because the hours of business were scarcely run, we did not find the company here very numerous or very select.

The next day, our fellow-traveller from Moscow accompanied us in our rambles about the fair, and introduced us to some of the more remarkable of the merchants from Eastern Russia. The first among these whom we visited, were two Tatar princes from Kazan, who held several of the stalls along the cross-lines at some distance from the centre of the fair, and the chief article of whose merchandise was an excellent description of soap, which is made at Kazan, and is known and esteemed throughout Russia. It is of a dark brown colour; and that which is refined and scented, is most agreeable to make use of, as well as effective, and certainly deserves as much as Russian canvass, to be received in all parts of Western Europe.

We found the good Moslems seated over their coffee, with their chiboock, as placid as Arabs; but upon recognising their friend our companion, they rose and invited us across the barrier which separated the buyers from the sellers, but not as Arabs might have done in a Mussulman land, to begin with the pipe and coffee and finish with business when the pipe required filling, but rather like the Russians, in shewing us at once their

goods to the best advantage, instead of leaving us to discover all their good qualities ourselves. When we conversed with them, however, upon subjects apart from their affairs, we found them models of dignity, good humour, and good manners.

From this quarter we returned to the centre of the fair, where we now paid a visit to several Tatars of the Chinese line.

We found two of the largest traders among these, engaged in their common warehouse on the ground floor, unpacking bales of silks and other Chinese goods; but they took us to an upper story of the building which they occupied, to show us their yet more precious stores of fancy articles, such as silk dresses and handkerchiefs; and they seemed delighted at our expressing some wonder at the riches they appeared to possess: and we did not leave them without an invitation to smoke and take coffee, but from which we excused ourselves for the present.

On the same evening, we drove to the banks of the Volga above the fair, where the tea is landed. We found a very busy scene here, and not the least interesting, of those we witnessed at Nijhni Novgorod. It was thoroughly Tatar. Or a few officials formed the only exception among the groups of which it was composed. These were in uniform, and were occupied in inspecting the tea as it was received, by probing the chests. For this purpose, they are armed, every one with a long tubular instrument, which they thrust through from one side or end of the chest to the other; and, upon withdrawing it, they at once ascertain the quality of the tea, and whether the chest contains any other articles of merchandise, either contraband or subject to higher duties than the tea. We observed that the chests were nicely lined within with tinfoil, and covered completely, and very carefully, without, with bullocks' hides.

The Russians attribute the incontestable superiority of the tea they every where drink, above any we are able to get in England, or in any other part of Europe, chiefly to its coming over land to them, while that obtained in other countries comes by sea, but also to the superior covering of the chests. From later information, however, obtained nearer the country in which the tea is produced, and to which a further reference will be hereafter made, I am induced to think, that the difference in the quality of the tea is wholly to be attributed to the difference of soil and climate in the several districts of the country in which the plant is produced.

Before we left this busy suburb of the fair, we were introduced by one of the merchants, into some temporary wooden houses, where several Tatar women, or at least women dressed in the costume of the Tatars, exposed a variety of fancy goods of Chinese manufacture for sale, such as coloured blinds, fans, and precious stones.

The fifth day after our arrival, we were engaged all day in the most irksome business of bargaining for trifling articles of merchandise, with Russians and Tatars, previous to the departure of my fellow-countrymen, who were to leave Nijhni Novgorod that evening for Moscow, on their return towards home.

Our bargains however accomplished, my friends departed tolerably loaded with choice articles of Eastern manufacture, and I was now left to make the most I could of the society of those whose acquaintance I had formed on the journey and since we arrived at the fair.

After the departure of my friends, for several days I passed the mornings in wandering about alone. But I always dined in the evening at the grand *restaurant* above-mentioned, where I usually met one or more of the merchants whose acquaintance I had formed; and I must mention here a trifling piece of mystery, with which

I was involuntarily connected, and which afforded us some amusement for one or two evenings.

Among my friends there was one who rarely failed to come at our accustomed hour, and who always brought such intelligence as might have been flattering, alarming, or amusing, to any stranger whom it concerned, according to the objects that brought him to the fair, or as the case might otherwise happen to be. This seemingly rather inquisitive gentleman, over our first course, gave us every evening a most exact account how myself had passed the time since we parted upon the previous day. He named the hour at which I had risen, the time at which I left my hotel, where I had walked, what conversation I had engaged in, with all to whom I had spoken, what I had purchased (if anything), the price paid, and even where the article purchased was deposited. The messenger of these curious tidings, would not, for some time, give any clue to the mystery which they seemed to involve. However, I concluded that he himself must be a member of the police in disguise, and that he had very legitimately entered upon the inquisitive research at an earlier period of my sojourn at the fair, but that being now quite satisfied of my perfect harmlessness, continued it merely to amuse our party. It turned out, however, to be the good work of some jealous dealers, who had taken it into their heads that I was a merchant in disguise, and had come to make covertly some large purchases, which might, as soon as the articles which I came to secure, were known, affect the market, and touch the interests of those who came to make the same purchases.

After a few days, I had the opportunity of seeing the fair and the society gathered within its circuit, in a somewhat different phase from that in which I had previously seen them. At the time I left England, it was

not my intention to attempt to penetrate further into Russia than the ancient capital. Upon the road, however, between St. Petersburg and Moscow, in a waking dream by night, I travelled in fancy far beyond the Ural mountains, and even beyond the eastern limits of the Russian empire in Asia. But the return of the day, and the conversation of a travelling companion of that journey, soon effaced for the time the agreeable vision which I had enjoyed. While dining in company, however, with the merchants above mentioned, a young man joined us, who had just arrived from the interior of the vast country which lies between the Ural mountains and the Pacific Ocean, and some information that I received from him through the interpretation of my friends, awakened my slumbering desire of penetrating at least into the heart of Siberia; and, after ripening my plans as far as it lay in my power, there appeared to be no difficulty in the way, provided I could obtain a passport. I determined, therefore, to wait upon the governor, whose politeness I had already experienced, to ask at once for permission to undertake these travels; and I took an early opportunity of so doing.

I shall be particular in my account of my visit to the government house upon this occasion, for the purpose, partly of reporting what I saw of the manner in which business is transacted, between the Russians high in authority and the people of all classes who necessarily approach them, and partly that it belongs to, and was the first incident connected with, the travels that were afterwards undertaken and accomplished.

As I had occasion before to know that the governor spoke both French and English, I came to his office in the palace alone. Before reaching the particular apartment in which his excellency sat, there were two spacious rooms to pass through, at the doors of which

were posted sentinels, in addition to the guard of honour without. No obstruction, however, was offered to the passage of any of those who presented themselves at either of them. Upon entering the first room, I found about a dozen *mujiks*, or men of the peasant class, waiting to obtain an interview with the governor, and, in the second, about four times that number of persons of the various nations at the fair, and of the various classes above that of the peasant. After walking about the room for a minute or two, I observed, at a signal from an official who came out of the governor's apartment within, all the persons present form themselves into a large semi-circle, plainly for the purpose of receiving his excellency, now about to appear; and, as I knew it to be the custom on these occasions, for parties to place themselves in the order in which they arrived, I took, of course, the last place at the end of the line which was the farthest removed from the door of the inner apartment.

As soon as the governor made his appearance, he addressed the first man upon his right, and then the next and the next, one after the other, granting, it might be, the request of one, and refusing that of another, but all with such truly national despatch, that every one was cleared off, and my turn arrived in about half the length of time that it would have taken one of our colonial governors to have got at the pith of a single sitting visitor's prosaic tale. Indeed, I cannot help thinking that, if the secretaries of state of Queen Victoria, were to adopt this method of transacting business, and were at stated periods to give similar interviews to all persons whose business might not be known to them, or known to be frivolous, as well as to those who have no business at all, that great advantage would arise to the public interests, from the time that

would be gained for the transaction of more important affairs.

When my turn came, the governor, as soon as he saw me, expressed surprise at finding me still at the fair. He knew that two English passports had received his signature, and he was under the impression that I had quitted his government with the friend with whom I had arrived. But without waiting for any reply to the observation he had made, he begged me to enter his inner apartment, where he said he would speak with me as soon as he had despatched the peasants that were waiting to see him in the third room; and I obeyed the behest.

In a few minutes the governor returned to his own chamber; and after some ordinary remarks had been made, I entered at once upon the matter for which I had taken my place among the rest of his visitors. The unexpected demand soon changed the language of ceremony into that of business, and led to a number of questions on the part of the governor, concerning the objects of my proposed journey, the answers to which amounted merely to an assurance that they were chiefly, mere curiosity to see how men lived at so great a distance from the seats of civilisation upon the ancient continent, that I might compare their manner of life with that of the natives of the woods in the New World, with whom it had been my lot for many years to dwell; but that this motive was nevertheless mingled with some interest about the mines of the precious metals, and the geological as well as geographical features generally of the vast country under the Russian dominion.

The prince now expressed yet greater surprise than he had done on a former occasion, that an Englishman should choose to wander so far from the country which he politely termed the very seat of comfort and intelligence, without higher or better-defined objects than

I seemed to him to have. I replied, however, to this, induced by my doubts of his assent to my wishes of passing the Ural mountains, that although born and bred in the island, of the condition of the inhabitants of which he had spoken so flatteringly, my case might be considered peculiar; for that it had been my good or evil fortune since quite a youth, to be a wanderer, save at intervals, far from all the advantages that my country might possess, first, in the prosecution of one of the most interesting pursuits in which men engage, and afterwards from the want of what habit had rendered almost necessary to existence.

In answer to this, the prince asked at what epoch I proposed going into Siberia. To which I replied, that I should like to commence my journey as soon as possible after I might obtain my passport. "I must," he then said after a few moments' pause, "consider further of this. It has taken me by surprise. Had your objects been of a commercial character, there would most likely have arisen no difficulty about the matter. Where," he then added, "do you usually dine?" "At the *restaurant*," I replied. "I beg then," said he, "that you will dine with me to-day," mentioning at the same time the hour; "when I shall have the pleasure of introducing you to the princess and some friends lately arrived; and upon the affair of the passport we will take another opportunity to speak further."

Upon this, I returned thanks for the invitation, accepted it, bowed and retired.

CHAP. IV.

NIJHNI NOVGOROD.

Dinner at the Government House.—The Prince in honourable Banishment.—Trait of Manners at Court at St. Petersburg.—Admiral Ricord.—Ceremonies of the Russian Table.—Saloon.—Coffee-Conversation.

When I came to the government house, at the appointed hour, I approached the door of the saloon, in some doubt about the manner in which I ought to bear myself after my application. It does not occur to all of us, during the course of our lives, to be applicants for a favour, and at the same time, guests at the table of the party to whom our petition has been addressed. Such, however, was to be the traveller's position at the government house at Nijhni Novgorod on this occasion. All my doubts, however, not only concerning the management of myself, but also concerning the prosecution of my journey, were set aside as soon as the door of the saloon opened, by my reception, and the manner of my introduction to the princess and such of the guests as were already assembled.

But before making any further remarks concerning the host and hostess of the government house, and such of their friends as I met there, I must mention an occurrence which I subsequently heard was the cause which brought the prince and the princess to this government. I shall refer to the circumstance merely as a current report at the fair, the very credit given to which, whether the report were well or ill founded, being sufficiently characteristic of the spirit of the age in Russia, to render it worth our notice.

I was informed, that the prince and princess Urasoff, whose united ages could not at this time have exceeded fifty, were, about two years since, among the greatest ornaments at the emperor's court, where many of those little whimsical occurrences, which in our country relieved the sameness of court etiquette during the reigns of our earlier sovereigns, still take place, and that, on one occasion, the prince played a part that so offended the emperor, that he was sent with the princess and their family, from the brilliant court of St. Petersburg, into a kind of honourable banishment, with the appointment, for I believe, five years, to the government of this department.

The Russians, whether designedly or not, have a way of relieving the formal moments that precede the announcement of dinner, during the assembling of the guests, by the introduction of a kind of semi-meal called *zakooska*, which some translate luncheon, but certainly improperly, on account of the different relative times at which these two meals are taken. The luncheon, whether a meal or not, we take about midtime between our two chief daily meals; whereas, the *zakooska* comes immediately before we sit down to dinner. A tray is usually found on the table when the guests arrive, upon which there are always placed several stimulating dishes, such as smoked meats, anchovies, sardines, and caviare, and some corresponding wines and spirits; and, in partaking of these, the guests at once escape the heaviest moments in our social hours, and sharpen their appetites for the coming feast.

While the guests that had already assembled on this occasion were whetting their appetites over the *zakooska*, fresh parties were successively arriving. Several officers in full uniform entered, one by one, and several of the *chinovnik*, or civil officials, who were also in uniform. At length a little more ceremony which I observed at

the opening of the door, and the prince's advance to meet the party entering, proclaimed some guests of more distinction than those already arrived. As soon as the first bows and greetings of this party and their host were over, as the new guests advanced towards the part of the room where the only two ladies that were present were seated, I observed that one among them was in naval uniform, and wore an admiral's coat with several decorations, and that the rest were young military officers.

As soon as the compliments of the newly arrived guests were paid to the ladies, the prince introduced me to the naval officer as Admiral Ricord, and then turned to welcome some more guests that were still arriving. The admiral spoke such pure English, that I should have taken him for my countryman, had I not known that there was no Englishman of his rank in the Russian service. But words of course had scarcely passed, before he informed me that he was an Italian by birth, but that he had served as a youngster in the British navy, and had been a midshipman under Nelson.

As soon as the guests were all assembled, a pair of folding doors were suddenly thrown open, and the table of an inner room appeared, encumbered with all the showy ornaments that grace the feasts of princes and the representatives of sovereign power.

The way was now shown by the host and hostess. The guests did not observe much order in entering, and they took their places indiscriminately, as the host and hostess seated themselves on each side of the table in the middle.

The Russian table, in relation to the viands with which it is covered, is, even to those who have been in most of the countries of Europe, still new. The Russian dishes that seem to be the least related to the Continental dishes generally, are fish soup, and *batvenia*

or beer-soup. Almost all the rest, resemble more or less those of the Germans. There are several kinds of fish of which soup may be made; but it is not until we reach the banks of the Volga, that we can get that which is here most esteemed, indeed, in every way in which it is cooked, and which is probably the best of any in the world for that purpose. This is the sterlet. It is a white fish, at once delicate, rich, and high flavoured; but it will not keep to be transported to any distance. It resembles in form the shark and dog-fish of the ocean, and is no doubt a variety of the sturgeon; but it is rarely larger than what we should consider rather a small-sized cod. I believe it is not found anywhere west of the grand river of Russia and its tributary streams; but it abounds, and is considered to be better, in all the rivers east of the Volga, on both sides the Ural mountains; and means certainly ought to be found to introduce it into every considerable river of Western Europe. When fried, this fish requires no butter to be used in the cooking, and sauce is rarely used with it when eaten after any way in which it may be cooked. The *batvenia*, the other rarity to the Southern European, is composed of salmon, *quass*, which is the beer of the country, sorrel, and cucumber.

We had many good dishes on this occasion, and abundance of excellent French wines, including Champagne. But the time occupied in eating, drinking, and conversation, which were all enjoyed, and all ended, together, was very short. The Russians have not yet acquired the peculiarly British practice of deferring all subjects worth talking about on these occasions, until the proper viands are removed, and over the juice of the grape falling to more serious discourse, and therefore make the best use of this time while eating; so that as this was the first Russian table at which I dined, where I was not myself the sole guest, I was taken by

surprise when the whole party, in the very midst of a lively discourse, at the signal of the host himself, at once rose; thus ending the pleasures of the table just at the point that we, at least when we have no ladies to part with, are apt to think they begin.

Few of the Continentals, although they read of cabinet dinners, aldermen's feasts, and of the dining and feasting of the leading members of a thousand institutions of one kind or another in England, have any idea of the nature of the influence of these entertainments upon the affairs in which those who attend them are associated, or indeed of their effects generally upon our entire social condition. It is easy for them to believe that much business may be talked of, and some transacted, on these occasions. But the true character of the influence of our convivial tables, is assuredly to be sought in the charities which are not alone introduced into the particular affairs of the associated *convives*, but also thereby spread generally through the serious business of all men's lives.

Certainly, the state that debated their political affairs once when sober and once when inebriated, were in the wrong in supposing, at least if the effects of their intoxicating beverages were like those of Port wine and Sherry upon ourselves, that their debates were more energetic when under the influence of them. Let a Whig and a Tory, for instance, in the extreme of these party opinions, if such be still extant, or a Puritan and a Puseyite, be set one against the other in unrestrained discourse, before dinner and an hour after the dishes have disappeared, and who will not acknowledge that, whatever the effects of the wine upon our other faculties, its effects generally upon the passions is sedative, and that it becomes thereby productive of charity enough to value all the egotism in the world?

As we all arose from the table, a little ceremony of

peculiarly Russian character took place, which is never omitted after a meal, whether in private or public, or in the houses of the high or of the low of the land; and I choose this place merely as the first occasion that offers for mentioning it. It is the custom to have, usually in one corner of the room in every house, whether of the prince or of the peasant, some picture, either of the patron saint of the family, in which none is wanting, or of one of the holy personages of religious history; and upon rising from the table, which is always a simultaneous movement, the whole party turn at the same time towards this picture, and cross themselves and bow. After this, the host turns to his guests, and the guests turn to the host, and with their bows to each other, are completed the religious and social rites of the Russian dinner-table.

On occasions similar to the present, the bowing is stiff and ceremonious; but when the entertainment is more of a private character, the guests near the middle, or top, or bottom of the table, as it may happen, shake hands with the host or hostess, or with both; and, when there are children under fourteen or fifteen years of age and their mother is at table, the children generally, whether boys or girls, kiss their mother before any movement is made towards the saloon. After our more formal ceremonies, however, at the government house we re-entered the saloon, where coffee awaited us.

We found the windows now thrown open to admit the full sounds of the notes of the band, which was playing some lively airs in front of the palace. There was scarcely time to take a single cup of coffee and a rapid glance over the fine sight which the fair exhibits from these windows, before there was a movement of the governor's guests towards the door. It is the fashion in Russia, for every one to retire immediately

after taking coffee, the indolent to indulge in a *siesta*, and the diligent to take a little exercise, before returning to their ordinary occupations. The retirement, however, on this occasion, of those who were the greatest strangers, was arrested by the governor; and I presently found myself seated in company with the admiral and the prince, in front of the princess, who reclined upon a sofa with the only guest of her own sex by her side; and a lively conversation now took place, in as pure English as I ever remember hearing spoken by any foreigners, not entirely educated in England.

The ladies asked a great many questions concerning English customs, in relation to our manners in our social intercourse; and seemed highly interested and amused with the little contrasts, which the different customs of our two dissimilar countries seemed to exhibit.

To myself, this intercourse, after several days forced discourse with the merchants, upon the material and statistics of the fair, and other matters with which very properly their heads were brimful, was proportionally the more delightful. But it is not necessary to attempt any reproduction of our discourse, not only because what fell from this highly accomplished couple in particular, might be very difficult, if it were consistent with propriety, to report, but also because the conversation was chiefly of our country and of its literature, which had excited the prince and princess's highest veneration.

The admiral, too, related several anecdotes of our great naval hero, under whom he had served, which very probably are well known, although I had not myself before heard them, and might be twice-told tales, were they here repeated.

While the stranger guests were thus agreeably entertained, two fine children of our noble hosts' were led in by an English nurse, from whom I learned, that

Russian parents are not less apt to spoil their children than the fondest among ourselves.

I quitted the elegant and hospitable chambers of the government house upon this occasion, about two hours after we had risen from dinner; but not before I had received an invitation to occupy a place at the same table, every day during my stay at the fair.

Upon a subsequent occasion, I had the pleasure of meeting at the governor's table our countryman, Mr. Cobden, who had arrived the previous day. The governor introduced the two Englishmen to each other, before the dinner was announced. There was no time, however, for comparing notes of travels, as we were a minute or two afterwards seated at table, and Mr. Cobden left the fair on his return to Moscow, immediately after the dinner was over.

CHAP. V.

NIJHNI NOVGOROD.

Classification of the Russian Merchants.—The Baron Meyendoff.—A rich Serf.—Religious Character of the Merchants.—Horses.—Statistics.—Tatars and Persians.—Conversations with Tatars.—Consequences of shaving.—Arrangements for the Journey to Siberia.—Russian dread of Siberia.—Russian mode of calculating Accounts.—Travelling Carriage.—Parting with Friends.—Departure.

WHAT remains to be said concerning the fair in the true spirit in which it should be regarded, may be perhaps appropriately preceded by a few remarks concerning the peculiar classification of the commercial orders generally throughout the country, and upon the relations which they bear to the rest of the Russian people.

It has often been supposed in Southern Europe, that Russia has degraded her trading population, and arbitrarily subjected this indispensable class in every civilised state, to the disrespect of their equals, or even of their inferiors, both in worldly condition and in their natural position among the other orders of the people. But this impression is certainly erroneous. The student of political economy might, on the contrary, search the history of the commercial classes under every form of government, from the time the Phœnicians came to purchase the useful metals in our remote island, and through the age when the proud argosies of the royal merchant of the Queen of commercial states —

> "Like seigniors and rich burghers of the flood,
> Did over-peer the petty traffickers."

down to the late sovereigns of Egypt and Holland, and not find a system better adapted to the political age of the country in which it exists, than that which obtains in Russia.

Here, the political and social position of the trading portion of the population, and the ranks of the classes into which they must necessarily be divided, are regulated by a just standard, and defined by law. Thus, all those who are engaged in any way in commercial transactions, are formed into three grades, which have severally their place in society in proportion to their wealth, which must be regarded for the most part as the representative of merit, as well as the legitimate standard by which the position they ought to occupy should be ascertained. But besides the conveniences arising from the order which this arrangement introduces into the social relations among the people, it has the advantage of encouraging enterprise and industry among the whole class, the superior grade being open to every one who is able to accumulate sufficient wealth to attain that rank.

The three grades into which the trading population are thus divided, are termed the first, the second, and the third guild; and the amount of the wealth which determines the grade to which they severally belong, is ascertained by a tax of $1\frac{3}{4}$ per cent per annum, which is levied upon the capital, whether nominal or real, which they declare themselves to have engaged in their affairs. The amount necessary to entitle the merchant to the rank and privilege of the first guild, is 50,000 rubles; that which is necessary to the second, is only 5000 rubles; and that which is required for the third, is but 4000 rubles.

The merchants of the first guild, have exclusively the privilege of carrying on foreign commerce; and besides their rank among the members of the commercial fraternity, they have several of the privileges of the

nobility; while the merchants of the second and third guilds have no higher privileges than ordinary burghers.

As to the foreign merchants in Russia, they enjoy the same privileges as the merchants of the first guild, in everything essential that concerns foreign commerce; but they are not permitted to engage in the internal trade of the country.

It certainly seems to me that nothing could be more judicious, or more worthy of imitation, than this Russian mode of classifying the commercial order of the people. For acquired wealth, under the system upon which European society is based, must in general represent merit of one kind or other; and industry and perseverance, which are clearly the means by which men of this order become rich, are at the same time the qualities in men by which the state is most benefited and civilisation the most advanced, and without which no ability, no genius, no enterprise, can in an equal degree contribute to the interests and solid advantages of society.

Nevertheless, since the possession of these means to riches, is not incompatible with great depravity of character, it would appear at first to be wrong to deem wealth acquired by the possession of them, as a proper guide to distinguish merit of any kind, or determine the rank to which men should be entitled in civilised society. To this objection, however, an answer must easily suggest itself. By the qualities through which riches are acquired the state is benefited, and the state repays those who possess and use them for her advantage, by conferring rank and distinction. But where the moral conduct seems to form a contrast to those qualities by which the state has determined the formal rank of the citizen, public opinion operates to counteract the disadvantages which might arise from the too great respect paid to those who possess attributes

which, however, they may benefit the state, politically considered, when unaccompanied by corresponding virtues, have not a favourable effect upon the general interests of society.

I have not yet mentioned among my acquaintances at Nijhni Novgorod, the Baron Meyendorff, the superintendent of the fair. One of the letters of introduction which I brought to Moscow from St. Petersburg, was from the accomplished Russian traveller and author Prince Alexis Soltykoff, whose works will be found mentioned in another section of these travels, and was addressed to the baron, who resides at Moscow, where I received many civilities from him, which were now renewed, much to my advantage, in seeing the various phases of the fair.

The superintendent did not arrive until the traffic was at the highest. Soon after his arrival, he obligingly accompanied me to inspect some of the principal warehouses and better sort of stalls for the sales by retail. Among the latter, in the grand alley of the fair, there was one kept by a cutler, who was very justly considered a curiosity of the place, on account of the mechanical skill with which he was gifted by Nature. Born a serf, and still in a state of bondage, he had accumulated great riches, which he was permitted to possess and enjoy. From his first essay, during his leisure hours, unaided by any rules of art, and without any of the instruments usually employed by the workers in the same craft, he had been able to produce such beautiful and useful articles in every branch of cutlery; that the demand for his goods had become so great as to create a trade that kept the population of a whole village employed for the benefit of the proprietor of the estate to which he belonged.

There was a little trait of Russian eccentricity and propensity to extremes, connected with this ingenious

mechanic's history. By the Russian law, every serf is permitted to purchase his own freedom. But the law has not settled the conditions. They are left as a matter of arrangement between the seignior and the serf. In the present instance, vanity and eccentricity in the mind of the seignior had struggled with honour and charity, and these opposite qualities had neutralised one another; and a mere whim kept the serf in a state of bondage, without in effect any exaction of service or restraint upon his exercise of all the advantages of a state of freedom.

It may be mentioned here, that vast numbers of the serfs that belong in particular to those who do not possess landed estates, or do not employ all their serfs upon those they do possess, are either let out, or are at liberty to go where they will and engage themselves in what they will, upon the condition of paying an annual sum to be agreed upon with their master, and which is called "*obrok;*" and this was the position which this ingenious serf bore at this time to his liege lord. He was permitted to work for his exclusive benefit, go where he pleased, and possess all the money he could accumulate, upon condition only of paying about fifty shillings a year, as the mere value of a substitute of the commonest class to fill his place. Yet, such was the pride of the boyar that could act so far so honourably, that he would not take a very large sum offered him by his wealthy serf for his proper freedom. This serf was said to be making annual sales, the produce of the village mentioned included, of no less than 125,000*l.* sterling.

While we were overhauling an immense stock of furs in one of the warehouses of the great Russian Company, we were surprised by a sudden rush of twenty or thirty merchants in their beards and caftans into the company's wide show-room, without any mixture of foreigners of any description, and with them

several priests, with all the accompaniments to the performance of the holy offices of the Church. I thought at first, that some case of sudden illness had brought the confessors to the bed of the sick; but it proved to be an extra service of the Church in private; and I now learned from the baron, that the merchants, not being able to go to Church in consequence of the pressure of business, were accustomed to subscribe to have private masses celebrated within one of the houses in each of the respective lines by turns; and we happened to-day to enter that at which this service was to be performed.

Another day we drove to the distance of about half a verst from the centre of the traffic, to see the horses that composed a part of the merchandise of the fair. There were some of a very fine cross-breed between the Arabian and the Tatar, valued at from 40*l.* to 60*l.* English; but some small horses were selling for about 12*l.* the pair.

We paid a visit also to some gipsies in the same neighbourhood, and found them just like all the rest of this extraordinary race.

The baron only remained a day or two; but before he left, he gave me some particulars concerning the amount of the commercial transactions at the fair, and concerning some of the more important points from which the merchandise proceeded. I shall merely, however, here state, though upon this good authority, that there were usually at the fair at one time during the busiest of the days that it is held, about 300,000 strangers, and that at this time there were 260,000, engaged in the exchange of merchandise amounting to the value of 55,500,000 silver rubles, this ruble being worth about three shillings and four-pence English. The European foreign merchandise amounted to the value of 3,500,000; and Russian, 41,500,000; and the Asiatic to 10,500,000.

And it may also be mentioned as a remarkable fact, that there was not less than the value of 2,000,000 of rubles of medicinal drugs included in this authorised calculation.

My curiosity concerning the fair turned more towards the lines kept by the merchants from the East and from the coast of the Caspian Sea, than towards the western lines, occupied chiefly or exclusively by the European merchants; and, accompanied by one of my friends, I very frequently spent an evening with the Tatars, and once or twice smoked away an hour or two in company with the Persians. The chiboock, tea, and conversations concerning the wonderful extremes in the different races of men when at their native hearths, and the ease with which they were made by their mutual interest to assimilate here, and to work together for the benefit of all, were the pastimes in which we engaged. Our discourse, however, was never very lively, and when we were with the Persians, not always intelligible. All that was said by these most remarkable of the strangers at the fair, after being translated into the Russian language, remained unintelligible, to myself at least, until rendered again into one of the languages with which I was acquainted; and the same inconveniences of course attended the communications which were made from myself to them, in return for the information I received. They evinced, too, great disinclination to be asked any question apart from their affairs, or from commercial matters generally. They listened with tolerable attention to the description of a machine which performed the work of 1000 men in the production of cloth and cotton goods; but when an endeavour was made to give them an idea of the "Times" printing operations, they dozed over the wonder, just as men yawn over an unintelligible tale. When any questions were put to them, concerning the religion, and the social institutions, of their country, they

affected, as it appeared to us, either ignorance of, or indifference concerning, all matters of the kind, and always brought the subject back again to the affairs of trade.

Our conversations with the Tatars were more lively, partly owing, as it appeared to us, to their greater intelligence, and partly to their being acquainted with the Russian tongue. Those in particular who were subjects of the emperor, seemed pleased with questions put to them concerning their religious institutions; and one of them became quite my warm friend, when I spoke a few words of Arabic, not yet forgotten with the rest that my spare vocabulary contained when among his Mussulman brethren in the South, and which he perfectly understood. Our discourse with this Tatar interested me the more, as a departure, at least, from the usual reserve of his Arab and Turkish fellow Moslems. He asked many questions concerning our English institutions generally, and certainly seemed to me to comprehend such explanations as were attempted to be given to him, quite as well, which is, however, to say but little, as Frenchmen or Italians ever seem to do anything told them concerning the character of the government under which we live. Among other things, he asked whether we had any mosque in England, for any resident Mussulmans or visiters that might be among us. In answer to this, I told him that I believed we had not; but, that I thought, at the same time, that this was purely because we had very few or no visiters or residents of the Mahomedan religion among us. And to this, my friend who acted as interpreter, added, as he informed me, and doubtless with intent to compliment my country, that as we were considered in Europe, to be, after the Russians, the Germans, and the French, the most tolerant people in the world, there could be little doubt that, if any Tatars thought proper to come and settle

among us in sufficient number, that they would be admitted, if not to equal privileges with those who professed the proper religion of the country, at least to such as the Jews enjoyed, who, though not quite put on a level with the Christians, had many synagogues in our cities.

Our conversation still proceeded a little further upon the same subject. No one who is acquainted with the Koran, and the opinions which the Mahomedans hold of the Author of Christianity, and also with the opinions entertained by the reformed Jews in England concerning the Author of our religion, can fail to recognise one remarkable similarity, amid many wide differences, between the two opinions entertained by these people severally upon that particular head. The Moslems, it is clear, regard "Jesus the son of Mary" as a prophet only second to the author of their religion; while the reformed Jews, who have rejected the old scandal of imposture, still retained by the rest, regard "Jesus of Nazareth" as a reformer of the corruptions which crept into their system during the Babylonian captivity, and as a just as well as bold opponent of the hypocrisy of their priests, who persecuted him even to death.* There is between these two religions in relation to each other, also, a perfect agreement concerning the unity of the Deity, with entire exemption from the least approaches to idolatry.

These two circumstances in particular formed the subject for the rest of our discourse with our Mussulman friends; but as details concerning conversations that were not always very clear to the parties by whom they were held, would necessarily be very tedious, I shall only further report the answer of the chief

* Of which any one may have ample proof, by attending the cheerful little synagogue in Margaret Street, London.

among them, to a last question that was put to him, in order to sound, if possible, the depth of the liberal feelings which he seemed during our discourse to evince. It was asked the Mussulman, whether he did not think, that all the nations and people throughout the world, that under one form or another necessarily worshipped the same Deity, would in some later age, be of the same opinion upon all essential points in religion, and feel no scandal in performing their oraisons in unison, within the same, or in similar temples. But to this, the good Tatar, who had become now more grave than when our discourse began, only answered: — "God is great; and He made Mussulmans, and Christians, and Jews, and men of all other creeds; and He knew what was right." Then, after a puff or two at the chiboock, while this was repeating to me, he added: — "And men are only as the dust beneath His feet, and live in darkness; and, instead of searching to find out what was above their comprehension, it were better that they should rest satisfied with the knowledge they possess: that God is compassionate and merciful, but to men incomprehensible." Upon another occasion, however, the same Tatar much eulogised the Russian Government for its tolerance, and said that he considered that all religions in effect, in Russia, enjoyed perfect equality of privileges.

Some of the Tatars, that came from the countries bordering upon the Chinese empire, bore a nearer resemblance to the people of that country than any of the rest; but they were much finer men, both in stature and in carriage, than any of the Chinese that we see by accident in England. They had of course no women with them; nor did I see a Tatar woman, until I was several hundred versts east of Nijhni Novgorod.

I thought when there was no longer any doubt of my obtaining my passport, that at least all moral

obstacles in the way of carrying out my plans were at an end, and I began to make my little purchases and arrangements for my journey into Siberia. This, however, was not to be done in a day, as I had no servant and could obtain no other interpreter or aid than sometimes one and sometimes another of my three principal friends, Herr Kroft, Herr König, and Gospodin Koumanine, all of whom were much occupied with their affairs.

My good friends had severally undertaken, however, to do their utmost to find me a travelling companion among the dealers in Siberian and Chinese merchandise; but after a day or two's good offices in this way, two of the three became traitors to their engagements, from a very strange, though pardonable cause.

Every one knows what it is to be killed with kindness, as our English phrase runs; but it is not so common to find our friends conspire to arrest supposed danger by seeming unkindness. My Russian friend Gospodin Koumanine had commenced making some arrangements for me with a Tatar from Siberia, who was about to return to the seat of his affairs, when several of my friends, among whom was Herr Kroft, made a concerted attack upon this gentleman, on account of the aid he was giving me to prosecute my travels; and, in mere pity, they actually overthrew all that was done by my more confiding friend, towards forwarding my arrangements for the journey. They persuaded him that no sane person could contemplate going into Siberia, unless obliged by his commercial interests so to do; and by urging the dangers from robbers, bears, wolves, imprisonment under suspicion of having covert designs, and the effects of *ennui*, which they assured him in an Englishman always terminated in blowing out the brains, they succeeded in dissuading him from aiding me to complete the arrangements that he had himself commenced on my behalf.

It is wonderful how little is known in Russia Proper, of the world and its inhabitants beyond the mountains that divide Europe from Asia. Accustomed to connect with the country in Asia, the idea of exile, the Russians have a certain dread of its very name. The force of this feeling among the people generally may be easily imagined, when we find merchants accustomed to carry on business with the country, and even frequently to see parties who inhabit it, as will be shown in the sequel, but little acquainted, either with its condition, its resources, or the degree of security in which its inhabitants dwell. Thus, after I had had an interview with the Tatar traveller selected by my sometime faithful friend, and a long conversation with him concerning the proposed journey, my hopes were blown wholly to the winds.

I had previously consulted the governor, who I thought might be sending forward some officers on leave, or some officials upon public business to Siberia, with whom I might travel; but the prince recommended me by all means to travel with a merchant, if any one could be found about to undertake the journey, as there would be less restraint on my movements, and less necessity for keeping exact time.

In this state of my little affairs, I found myself left with only Herr König to aid my researches for a travelling companion; and, although I did not deem success in this, indispensable to accomplishing the journey, I was still desirous of finding some one with whom I might share the good and ill of the expedition.

Some days now passed before any thing occurred to excite fresh expectation, during which I passed my time alternately at the government house, and with the merchants to whom, as they were determined to give me no aid to accomplish what they deemed such a dangerous undertaking, I mentioned the matter no

more. At length, at the moment that I was about to make arrangements to travel alone, Herr König, always faithful to his promise, found a merchant of one of the Russo-German provinces, who was about to make a journey to Tomsk in Western Siberia, with some European goods purchased at the fair for an adventure; and to him he now introduced me; and, after half an hour's conversation, all arrangements were made; and this gentleman and myself agreed to set off together for this frightful land, after two days.

During the remaining time that I was at the fair, I was chiefly occupied, aided by my best friend, in completing my purchases and preparations for the journey which, if it presented no terrors, was not to be looked upon as free from inconveniences, or like a journey through a populous or civilised country.

I choose this opportunity to mention an instrument used for making calculations, which, although general in Russia, I had not, until engaged in this manner with a friend, an opportunity of fairly examining. It is called a *stchoti*, and is used by the native merchants every where, to the exclusion of every other method of making calculations, and by even the Germans and other foreign merchants in their ordinary reckonings, from its being found quicker and less liable to error than every other means of reckoning whatsoever.

The *stchoti* consists of a wooden frame, the size of which is indifferent; but in general it is about a foot long by about six inches in breadth, and has ten, but may have more, metal wires across it, upon every one of which there are ten sliding balls of wood. With this simple instrument, in consequence of the roubles and copeks admitting of the decimal calculations, the Russians are able to accomplish the most seemingly abstruse reckoning which their complicated commercial transactions involve, with wonderful rapidity and

exactness. Nevertheless, this is not done without long practice. When the art is once learned, however, it is practised and preferred by the Germans and other foreigners, to any other mode of calculation; and the instrument is to be seen in common use, even in the counting-houses of the merchants of the first guild whether native or foreign, both at St. Petersburg and Moscow, and at all the seaports in the empire.

The arrangements being completed for our journey towards the Ural mountains, on the 20th August I paid a farewell visit to the governor and his family. I came to the palace soon after noon, at which hour business is usually suspended in Russia, and I found the prince engaged in directing some workmen who were fitting up a large room for theatrical amateur performances, the profits of which were to be appropriated to charitable purposes, and the princess seated upon one of the benches intended to form the pit of the theatre. When I took leave of this noble and hospitable couple, they made me promise that I would visit them upon my return; and although it was not again in my power to see them, on account of the direction of my travels, their unaffected politeness is not the less indelibly engraven upon my memory.

As there are no *diligences*, and no other public carriages beyond Nijhni Novgorod, my future fellow-traveller had purchased for our use, one of the private travelling vehicles of the country, called a *tarantass*. Our place of rendezvous before our departure, was at a merchant's, at one of the corners of the great square before mentioned. When I arrived here with my effects, I found our carriage before the merchant's door; and my new companion soon made his appearance with a train of friends, among whom was the obliging Herr König and several other of my acquaintances.

The tarantass is a sort of long cabriolet with four

wheels, and has the body suspended upon ash poles which serve in the place of springs. That which my companion had provided, was rude enough externally, and within it was without seats or any substitute for them, and seemed little calculated for a travelling carriage. This most uncomfortable looking of vehicles, was just, however, what it should be; as it was necessary that we should carry bed, bedding, and everything proper to enable us to enjoy as much comfort as possible within, to counterbalance the rough roads and other inconveniences we must expect to encounter without; and our rude *tarantass* was in half an hour converted into a travelling vehicle containing all the most necessary furniture of a bedroom, storeroom, and kitchen. Everything, indeed, was so arranged as to make soft and convenient seats by day, and reclining couches by night; and it now seemed as if nothing could be more comfortable than our appointed equipage.

I shall long remember the quarter of an hour that preceded our departure. It was already late in the day, and besides our more immediate friends and acquaintances, there were a number of others to whom neither of us was more than slightly known, who came nevertheless to bid us farewell, and to express their hopes of seeing my companion again at the fair the following year, and myself at Moscow before the coming winter's snow disappeared. Our parting with all those we knew, was most gratifying to both of us. I thought commerce had too certainly hardened all hearts at Nijhni Novgorod, to admit a spark of sentiment upon a much greater occasion than the present. Even the good intentions displayed in the opposition I had encountered in making my arrangements, owing to my thinking only of the inconvenience which I feared it might occasion me, I had not yet rightly appreciated. But the parting hour having arrived, the care of the same friends to see us

off, and to see that we wanted nothing, and the concern and interest they now took in the success of our journey, and their last greeting, proved they had had no object in their opposition, save what arose from their gloomy impressions of the country to which we were going.

The scene, however, immediately before we mounted our carriage, and the manner of the leave-taking of some of our friends, was not precisely to an Englishman's taste. It was such, indeed, as requires that the whole soul should be engrossed with the sentiment that is "father to the act," to be patiently endured. Thus my travelling companion and his German and Russian friends fell to kissing, like a set of *grisettes* or schoolgirls, when one among them might be going upon a journey. My own turn, indeed, in this way came; but my friends were happily less numerous than the merchant's; and perhaps one ought to be content to be done with by the Russians, as the Russians do with one another. However, I recommend every English traveller in Russia, as he must have moustache at least, if he would not be peculiar, to wear always a monstrous pair. He cannot tell when he may want them, to defend him from the scratching of another's; and if always ready they may lessen at least, many a shock of the nerves, if he have any, before he is reconciled to the feminine mode of taking leave of friends and greeting their return.

The scene, however, that finally closed this eventful leave-taking, made some amends. Quite a crowd had by this time gathered to give us the last farewell. The whole party stood around our carriage; and, as the *yemstchik*, or postilion, mounted in front of us, and we all lifted our hats for the last time, they gave us three such cheers as those who know our seaports have often heard given to a brave vessel and her gallant crew, when about to glide out from the smooth waters of the haven, to be long at the mercy of the winds and waves.

CHAP. VI.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE RUSSIANS.

General Remarks.— Impressions entertained.— Degrees in the Progress of Society.— The Degree attained by the Russians.— Mixture of the Patriarchal and Monarchical Systems.—Nobility. —Serfs.— Popular rural Institutions.

BEFORE commencing the account of the journey through the wide countries which lie before us, it will be as well to pause for a moment, to consider briefly some of the more remarkable and least known, or least appreciated, of the institutions of the Russians. It is first, however, necessary to make a few remarks upon the general system of which they form a part.

Perhaps as Englishmen, in our conscious pride in our own political institutions we are too much accustomed unthinkingly or unjustly to regard those of other nations with feelings of disdain. But if we would estimate truly the laws and institutions of any people, we ought to consider what is their state of advancement, and what the adaptation of their laws to the degree of refinement or intelligence at which the mass of the population has arrived. Now, if we take a very slight glance over what history in general presents to us, concerning the institutions which have enabled men to live in a state of society, and thereby to reap the benefit of the concentrated labours of the community, we perceive several distinct degrees in their progress, which for our present purpose may be divided into four grand periods. The first of these may be called the patriarchal; the second, the aristocratical; the third, that of simple monarchy; and the fourth, the constitutional.

The first, or patriarchal form of government, was evidently founded directly in nature; and it was happy for mankind that the bonds which first united them in society, were the paternal and filial affections. But such a government, in its purity, was adapted only for small or errant tribes, having but one simple idea concerning government, which was obedience, and who were strangers to any other system, by the knowledge of which their respect for the patriarch of their commonwealth might have been diminished, and who were not exposed to the aggression of strangers. But the history of this period is so often mixed with fable, that it is difficult to determine what degree of happiness, "our being's end and aim," men did then really enjoy.

During the second, or aristocratic period, mankind were probably seen in their truest state of barbarism. Patriarchal and filial feelings no longer existed beyond the domestic hearth; and war was then the most constant and the most terrible, and the manners of men were the most depraved. Thus the annals of this age, of those European nations with whose history we are the most familiar, form but a register of oppressions at home, and of perpetual wars with every neighbour.

The third period, or that of simple monarchy, appears like a return to that of nature, after the experience of ages of anarchy and barbarism. It is now that we first find security of property sufficiently established to encourage the accumulation of wealth and the necessary leisure for the cultivation of the arts and sciences, by which the labours of men are combined and made to react upon the sources that nourish them.

Reverting to the political institutions of Russia, we can scarcely fail to observe, that this great empire, is at this time in the third period of its social existence, though its institutions differ from those which prevail

in the other simple monarchies which still exist in the more advanced nations of Western Europe, by reason of the unequal progress of the different classes of the people, which has been owing to the early refinement of the court, and the necessarily slower advance among a widely distributed and numerous population. Thus in Russia there has arisen a mixture of the patriarchal or first form of government, with the monarchical in its simple and absolute character; and it follows that, if we would form a true judgment concerning the institutions under which her vast population live, we must not forget their origin, the stages through which they have passed, and their relations to the state of civilisation which has been attained; and we must avoid confounding these with such as belong to governments in a different stage of their development, or with institutions, in the formation of which different circumstances have led to different results.

From this mixture in the Russian government, of the patriarchal and monarchical elements, have proceeded great practical results, which are apparent in all the institutions of society; but especially in the classification of the people, and the organization of the rural institutions, throughout a great portion of the empire.

The classification of the Russian population is more arbitrary and more distinct than that of any other people. For our purpose it is sufficient to observe that, partly by law and partly by custom, the whole people are divided into four orders: the nobility, which in the widest sense of the term includes all the civil and military officers of the government; the *grajdane* or citizen, which comprehends the merchants, manufacturers, artisans, and all the trading population generally; the *mujiks* or peasantry, both free and in the condition of serfs; and the clergy.

The nobility submit by law to a division into no less than fourteen grades, in eight of which the privileges they enjoy were formerly hereditary and descended to all the members of the family alike; but by an ukase of the present sovereign, the hereditary privilege has been limited to the first five grades.

The highest title enjoyed by such of the Russian nobility as are not of the imperial family, is that of prince. The Russian princes are for the most part desended from the ancient chiefs of the independent sovereignties or principalities of the country, and some of them are of Tatar families. The rights and immunities of the nobles generally, were determined by an ukase of Peter the Great, and they are numerous. But neither the princes, nor any other among the higher of the order, such as counts and barons, in the main enjoy higher privileges than the rest of the nobility of the five superior grades.

A great part of the lands belong to the higher classes of the nobility. This gives them a proportionate interest in the agricultural industry of the country, in which is comprehended the labour of about twenty millions of the peasantry.

There is a great practical difference between the operation of the hereditary principle among the Russians and among ourselves. The Russian proprietor, is not tempted to perpetuate his glory through unborn generations, by any partial distribution of his property. By the laws of the realm, one-seventh of the landed estate passes upon the decease of the proprietor, to his widow in perpetuity, one-fourteenth to every daughter, and the residue to the sons equally.

The relations subsisting between the nobility possessed of estates and the peasantry that cultivate them, are similar to those which prevailed in Western Europe during our middle age. The proprietor is the feudal

lord, and the tenant is his serf; and the natural consequences of these obligations with which our own history has rendered us familiar, are those to which the Russian peasant is now submitted.

The second order of the people, according to the manner in which they have been above classed, consists of the *grajdanes* or citizens. It comprises all the free Russians that are not noble, such as merchants, manufacturers, and artisans, and some of the agriculturists, and admits of a subdivision into many classes. The highest of these are called *pocket-neeye-grajdanes* (free citizens), and is composed of such as have in any way distinguished themselves in their profession or art.

The *mujiks* or peasants of the various classes, compose the lowest order in the state. About forty millions of these are serfs; and about half of that number are attached to the estates of the nobility, and the rest belong to the crown.

The remaining order of the Russian people comprises the clergy of every class, both of the predominant and of the several other Churches.

With Russian subjects, from the prince to the serf there is no difference in their relation to the sovereign. To the sovereign all his subjects are as the members of one family, and equal to one another. But this will more particularly appear, if we take a slight review of the rural institutions which are established throughout several districts and in the villages, in many parts of the country.

These institutions belong to the patriarchal component of the mixed form of government above described. Their organisation is of a popular character, and they present so remarkable a feature in the Russian system of government and social economy generally, that they ought not to be passed over, in the shortest account

that could be given of the country. Their organisation is not, however, in all parts where they prevail, alike. But we will chiefly consider them in those districts where the serfs of the crown are in the majority, and where the crown is more free to perform what it lists, and where too, they have lately undergone modifications which will doubtless ere long lead to a similar reorganisation of all the rest.

The institution is a community, or commune, formed after the model of a family, in the relation of its members to one another and to their common head, upon a more or less grand scale. The chief, or presiding magistrate, is elected by the suffrages of the people, and is variously named, according to the degree of importance of the particular society over which he presides, as we shall presently see. This body possesses all the soil that lies within the bounds of its ascendancy, of which every member is entitled to an equal proportion, but of which he enjoys only the usufructs. Thus at the decease of a father of a family, the estate which he has enjoyed, does not go to his children, but reverts to the whole society, every individual member of which is entitled to an equal share. Thus, it will be seen, that this community and the grand family of the nation are herein the copy and reflex of one another. The sovereign is the chief of the whole nation, and every community severally is one of the members of his grand family, all of which are equally under his patriarchal authority and protection.

The communities are of three degrees of importance, in relation to the extent of territory and the population which they comprehend. Those of the simplest organisation, consist severally of a single village; those in the next degree above these, include several villages, and are called *selskoie-obschestvo* (rural communities); and those of the highest degree of organisation are

composed of several *selskoie-obschestvo*, and are called *volost.*

At the head of each of the village communities, there is a chief, who is elected by the suffrages of the peasants themselves, and called *starosta* (ancient). This officer thus elected, is aided by a council of ten, the members of which are elected by a majority of the fathers of families. By this little court, all minor judicial affairs of the village are conducted; but the members of the *starosta*'s council, do not remain more than a month in power by law, though they are not usually changed in a less period than a year. The *starosta* receives a salary from the government, of 158 rubles assignat a-year; but his aids in his judicial labours do not receive any pecuniary compensation. Some of the lesser villages possess, however, only a chief called *dessidtsky*, who has no salary.

The *selskoie-oschestvo*, which comprise several villages, are composed of five or six hundred fathers of families. These are presided over by a chief called a *stachina*, who is chosen by the votes of deputies, of which every village sends two. He enjoys a stipend of between 300 and 400 rubles assignat a-year. These have also courts, presided over by the *stachina*, and two assistants called *zassidytelli.* The power of the courts is, however, very limited, and, in civil disputes does not extend to matters exceeding the value of five silver rubles. The *volost*, or community of the highest degree of importance, including several *selskoie-oschestvo*, is presided over by a chief called a *golova* (head), who is elected in a similar manner to the rest of the chiefs of these societies, for the period of three years. Nevertheless, the civil chief of the district in which the *volost* is situated, is required to give his opinion upon the choice of the *golova*, which is sent to the chamber of the domain, or civil council, which is established in every department,

by whom it is presented to the governor, with whom rests the power to confirm or reject the candidate proposed by the peasants.

The *golova* may be re-elected for another three years, provided that, during the whole time of his first three years' service, no just complaint has been preferred against him. His salary is in most cases about 600 rubles, but in some cases more.

Each *volost* has also its court of justice, under the presidency of the *golova* and two assistants, and a jurisdiction in matters not exceeding fifteen rubles. At the court of the *golova*, there is also an appeal from that of the *stachina;* but the authority of the *golova* extends only to reduce the amount of penalties awarded, or to arrest the execution of judgment, where this may be deemed necessary, until reference be made to the *okroujnoi-natschatnik*, or rural chief of the department.

We are now at the point where these popular institutions blend themselves with the grand political organisation of Russia. Every department, or grand government, is composed of several *volosts*, which are presided over by the *okroujnoi-natschatnik*, who, being placed under the control of the chamber of domains before mentioned, becomes the link by which the unity of the double chain of institutions is accomplished.

It is now necessary to make a few remarks upon the peculiar relations between the boyars and their serfs, amidst these popular institutions.

Out of a population of about 65,000,000, there are in Russia about 40,000,000 in that state of bondage which some denominate slavery, and others serfage; but which at least resembles, though it is not exactly the same as, that of our peasantry under the feudal system of the middle ages. These serfs are nearly all of the purely Russian blood of the Sclavonic race, very

few of the rest of the several other races, having been at any time subjected to the same degradation. We must refer to the origin of these relations between the noble and the peasant, in order to show their true character.

Previous to the year 1601, no such obligations existed between the owners of the soil and the peasants that worked it, and no constrained labour was known. In that year, however, the usurper, Boris Godonnoff, passed an ukase, or decree, by which the peasants were restrained from migrating, or changing their residence, which reduced them at once to the condition of serfs *glebæ adscripti*. From this time, however, they gradually became more and more under the authority of the boyars, and petty proprietors, to whose lands they were attached, until the reign of Peter the Great, at which epoch, when all things tended to settled principles and determinate ends, they became, merely by chance, or by the force of the severity with which all parties in the state exacted the obligations which custom had established, at least *de facto* slaves, and transferable at the will of their liege lords. But it is remarkable, that they have not been, even up to this time, reduced by direct ukase to absolute servitude *de jure*.

It is by ukase and the law, indeed, that this vital portion of the civil life of the state in Russia, has been preserved from the utter annihilation with which it has been at times threatened. From the time of Peter the Great, the sovereigns of Russia have frequently taken measures to soften the severity of bondage, and to define the relations of the lord and the serf, until, by a late ukase of the present emperor, the amount of labour which can be exacted from them is definitively fixed at three days in the week, and the right of the boyar to detach them from the soil is prohibited; and thus the rigour introduced during the

iron age of Peter the Great, has been happily abolished.

With respect to the relative condition of the serfs of the crown, and those of the nobility, the advantage lies upon the side of the former; and this is principally apparent in the privileges of the communities above described, but also in the greater facility with which they obtain permission to work on their own account, upon the payment of a certain gage, called as before mentioned *obrok*. Yet it is probable that, in the rare instances of proprietors found living the greater portion of the year upon their estates, the serfs are upon the whole more fortunately situated than those of the crown, as these must necessarily be exposed to all the inconveniences attending the absence of their liege lord.

In concluding this concise account of these remarkable institutions, I cannot avoid observing, that they appear to me to afford the fairest field that might be anywhere found, for the study of those benevolent men of other countries where slavery still prevails, who desire to manumit the degraded race among them, but can conceive no means of so doing that might not be attended with more evil than good. Yet they have excited no attention or interest beyond the bounds of the Russian empire.

CHAP. VII.

RELIGION OF THE RUSSIANS.

The national Church of Russia.— Origin.— Character.— Influence upon the Manners of the People.— Constitution.— Remarkable Tenets.— Tolerance.— Dissenters.— Effect of the Church upon International Relations.— Fanaticism of Dissenters.— Russian and Romish Churches compared.— Effects of the Ordinance of partial Celibacy.— Anomalies.

THERE is no feature, in the purely Russian character, more strongly and more generally marked, than the profound veneration for the religious institutions which are established in the empire. On this account, it is incumbent, before we mingle with the inhabitants of the interior and more distant provinces, to give some consideration to the character of the proper Russian Church, and to make a few observations concerning several other remarkable religious institutions, which exist in different districts of the country. We shall then have fresh in our memory such of the leading principles upon which Russian nationality is based, as cannot fail to aid every inquiry concerning the modes of life and manners of the people among whom we shall have occasion to mingle during the greater part of these travels.

The true birth of the existing Russian Church was coëval with the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, which, being before the demise of our Henry VI., was nearly a century before the people of this country escaped from the trammels of the Western Church. At this epoch, without any change in the

religious rites or form of government of the Eastern or Greek Church, the metropolitan of Russia was elected and consecrated without reference to the patriarch of Constantinople; and, in 1551, a general synod, held at Moscow, framed a code of ecclesiastical laws called the *Stolgav* or Hundred Chapters.

Russia, however, continued still to suffer the inconveniences incident to the existence of two powers temporal and spiritual, in the state, independent of each other. This introduced elements of discord into all the institutions of society, until Peter the Great united these powers in his own person, and thus converted the Church, that until now had been rather a clog upon the efforts of the czars to improve the people, into a means, independent of religious considerations, of promoting general civilisation. This grand reform was effected by the Russian sovereign, by the abolition of the patriarchal dignity, upon the decease of the patriarch Adrian, in 1702, and the establishment of a supreme ecclesiastical council under the name of the Most Holy Synod, and by proclaiming himself, henceforth, the supreme head of the Church.

Since this final settlement, the Church has undergone no other changes than some practical measures of amelioration, which have been, from time to time, introduced by the successors of the great founder of the independent Church.

The Russian Church may be considered, then, to be thus now constituted: The emperor is the supreme head of the Church, and all ecclesiastical affairs are administered by the council or synod such as it was established by Peter the Great, and which is composed both of ecclesiastical and lay members, not limited in number.

The synod, as regularly constituted, consists of two metropolitans, two bishops, the highest secular priest of

the realm, the procurator or attorney-general, two secretaries of state, five under-secretaries, and a certain number of the lesser officials in the civil service of the government.

Among the most remarkable of the ordinances of the Russian Church, considered in regard to its influence upon the manners of the people, is the partial celibacy of the clergy, and the rigour with which marriage is exacted where celibacy is not enjoined. Thus, while with the higher dignitaries, who are always of the monastic order, which is termed that of the black clergy, celibacy is required, with those of the secular order, or that of the white clergy, who are of every grade, and are called popes, marriage is enjoined even before they can be ordained. Nevertheless, the popes, in case of the decease of their wives, cannot form a second alliance; and consequently in that event, they usually enter the monastic order, through which they may now attain the highest dignities.

The dissenting sects appear to be numerous, and to have existed at almost all periods of the Church's history. We need here, however, only notice those which most excite our curiosity from the peculiar relations which they bear to the predominant Church, or from the extraordinary character of the tenets which they maintain.

Dissent generally, in the Churches and religions of the world, appears to have arisen out of attempts to reform or change the existing order of things, by those who seem, in a worldly point of view, the least interested in preserving what happens to be established. But the sect which is at least the most important of all those that dissent from the established Church in Russia, is composed of such as have resisted both changes and reforms, similar to those for which dissenters in other Churches and countries, have contended and suffered martyrdom, by thousands. It must be also remarked, that,

as this dissent took place after the virtual independence of the Church, though before the union of the crown and mitre, the sect is as free from the dangerous influence of the priests of foreign and less enlightened countries, as the dissenters from our established Church are from the influence of the priests of any foreign country whatsoever. Thus, though these dissenters have been at one time persecuted in Russia, they are at the present day respected by all parties; and, though sometimes included under the general term of *rokolniks*, (or schismatics), they are more generally termed *stavoobradtzee*, which signifies literally *of the old rite*, and still more frequently *staŕovertzi*, or literally, old believers.

The reform which was the cause of this grand dissent appears, as might have been expected among a people so devoted to religion as the Russians, to have had great influence in the change of their manners, and, certainly, a wholesome influence, in admitting among them many customs which were before common to other nations though unknown in Russia, and thus paving the way for the nearer alliance which has since existed between their country and the rest of the states of Europe. Among these, the custom of shaving and the use of tobacco were the most remarkable. Thus, shaving the beard at least, is now general among the more refined classes, and the use of tobacco among all classes belonging to orthodox rites. In the meantime, the *starovertzi* rigorously abstain from both these customs, which, however little they may be commended, have certainly tended to assimilate the people more nearly with the Western and more generally civilised nations.

As to the habit of smoking, which is common among all classes in all parts of the empire, and that of taking snuff, which is general among the peasants in many parts, I do not think the orthodox puffers are inferior

in their vocation, even to the Germans, who have been hitherto deemed the most accomplished people in Europe in puffing the sedative or exciting weed, nor have I known anywhere greater snuff-takers than the Russian peasants.

Of these two abominations in the eyes of the *staro-vertzi*, that of shaving is the greatest. By the laws of Moses, say these good people, men were forbidden to cut off their beards, and as those laws which are not expressly abrogated by the new dispensation are still binding upon Christian men, the beard cannot be taken off without an act of impiety. Moreover, they add, that the Author of their religion, according to all the representations that they have ever seen of him, wore his beard; and, indeed, that he could not have done otherwise, seeing that in his character of man he was a Jew.

The dissenting sects of all denominations, are said to be not less than fifty in number, and to include every degree of superstition, from the more moderate which arises from the mere veil drawn by misguided zeal over their better reason, to the most gross and the most shocking that were ever combined with the name of Christianity. Some have no priests. But these, many Italians and many Spaniards might say, must be the most fortunate of them all. Others only differ in certain rites which appear to us to be mere childish objects of contention. Others have merely their churches built in different forms from the rest, but would think it monstrously wicked to enter any house of prayer of any other form than that in which their own is constructed.

The most curious and original among the dissenting bodies, however, is a sect which are called Theodosians. The point in which these differ most remarkably from all the rest, is in the total separation of the sexes at

the celebration of the rites and ceremonies of their worship, even to each sex possessing distinct churches, and to the administration of all the offices of religion, not excepting the mass, by the women in the temples appointed for their use. The offices, however, are only performed by the elder spinsters among them, to all of whom the sect attach a degree of veneration accorded, I believe, to no spinsters in any orthodox or state church in any other country whatsoever. They are distinguished by the term *Christona namiesta*, the Betrothed of Christ.

But the sect which is the most extravagant, and which has alone excited any degree of abhorrence among the Russian people generally, is distinguished chiefly by a practice among the men of reducing themselves voluntarily to the condition of the keepers of the hareems in the countries where Mussulman manners prevail. This folly and wickedness, however, is not practised until after their marriage and the birth of one child. But, what is most strange of all is, that after this they continue to live happily with their wives, who are permitted or constrained so to deport themselves that their families may increase. And when this happens, the children are adopted by the victim of fanaticism, and treated precisely as if they were his own. It is to the honour, however, of the Russian government, that every possible endeavour has been made to suppress these diabolical usages, by making the parties that practise them amenable to the criminal law, and by sending such as are convicted of the offence, into exile in Siberia.

Returning to what properly regards the predominant Church, we cannot fail to be struck with the advantages which the Russian Church possesses over the Church of Rome, as well in its effects upon the morals of the people, as in relation to the world, at large.

One of the first things that strikes a Protestant stranger after his arrival in Russia, is the great tolerance, not only of the state, but even of the clergy and people, whether towards foreigners, or towards the different sects within the country. In a single street in the modern metropolis, and that too in which he finds the much-frequented Cathedral of Kazan, he may enter a Lutheran church, a Romish church, one belonging to the Sunnites, another to the Schütes, an Armenian church, and, at least, two more of the very names of which he perhaps never heard before. But, besides these, he may find many other churches of other sects, in the different parts of the town, including, of course, an English church.

The next advantage of the Russian Church over the Italian, is the performance of the divine offices in a known tongue, the Sclavonic, which, though it may at this day be considered by many as at least a half-dead language, is nevertheless better than the Latin, on account of its being still intelligible to the classes that most need instruction.

The reading of the Scriptures, both in private and in public, the former of which the clergy rather recommend than discourage, may also be considered among the advantages of the Russian Church.

Certain restrictions, however, are conjoined with this privilege, though not every one even among ourselves, perhaps, will differ from the Russian clergy concerning the value of these. By the Russians, it is deemed improper that girls at too tender an age should be acquainted with the history of vices and crimes found in the Old Testament more especially, but also in the New. All of the delicate sex, therefore, are restricted, until they attain the age of thirty, from acquiring any other knowledge of the sacred writings, than such as they may obtain from passages that are

read in the churches, and from the portions that appear in certain authorised publications.

But the most important of all the advantages which the Russian Church seems to possess over the Romish, is in the marriage of the clergy, under the regulations before mentioned. No one who has not been much in the more unenlightened of the Romish countries, can be fully acquainted with the demoralisation that springs from the canon of the Church which enjoins the celibacy of the whole sacerdotal order, or appreciate fully how necessary above all things, for the interests of morality, is the married life on the part of the clergy, beyond that of all other classes of men. Did no greater corruption of manners, indeed, spring out of the unhallowed restraint, than such as serves to furnish the theatres of these countries with subjects of laughter, the clergy might have, as the canon now stands, more extenuating circumstances to offer in excuse for their irregularities, than any other class of men. But these are light and venial errors, indeed, compared with many that prevail among them. But it must be understood, that reference is chiefly made here to the Italian section of the Romish Church, and by no means to those sections where the Church has no direct political influence, and no undue power over the unenlightened masses, and, last of all, to that section which forms a part of our own population, which only wants the first step, taken by the Russians in their several reforms, of electing their own metropolitan or pope, to be perfectly British, and all that we need desire.

It is to be regretted, however, in the Russian Church, that there are still some restrictions upon the clergy, in a matter that has been found so advantageous to religion and morals, both among ourselves, and in all Protestant countries. The higher dignitaries of the Church, must

proceed, as above mentioned, from convents alone, and remain bound by their vows. And again, the secular clergy, the most numerous and important body of the order, are subjected to obligations concerning their marriage, which, though the effects of this are partial, cannot be commended by any Protestant strangers in Russia. All who belong to this class are under the obligation to marry at too early an age, and are restricted to once only contracting matrimony.

With regard to the restriction to once only contracting matrimony, it may be said, that when the priest is deprived of his wife, his condition is henceforth no better than that of a priest of the Romish Church.

Two strange anomalies exist in the Russian Church, which it must be confessed withdraw something from the general spirit of tolerance which is upon the whole predominant, and which is so refreshing and agreeable to discover. The English traveller in Russia will be often perhaps surprised, but certainly delighted, in observing practical instances of charity towards all men; yet, if he should chance to have with him the fair partner of his joys and his sorrows, or his daughter, or his sister, and desire to enter the *ikonostas* or portion of the churches that exhibits the brilliant objects which peculiarly attract the livelier or more refined curiosity of the ladies, he must by no means cross the threshold of the holy place before he has cast off his companion, as not quite worthy, on account of her sex, as we are obliged to interpret the law, of treading upon the holy ground within. Had the celibacy of the secular clergy, indeed, been a law of the Church, we might have put a different construction upon this ungallant treatment of the ladies.

The other of the two anomalies alluded to, is of a very different character, and would shock a stranger

much more, if he were to enter a church on the 7th of March, with his ears open to understand the Sclavonic tongue, especially if he were at the same time but little acquainted with the people of the country. Upon that day he would hear priests of the most truly charicable and kindly Christian character, who daily bless everything and everybody, now pronounce such anathemas upon all heretics both dead and alive, that he would suppose himself listening to men who believed themselves to be the messengers of wrath of an offended and unrelenting Deity. Some Russians with whom I entered a church on this particular day, in a distant part of the empire, called this, indeed, a mere relic of the barbarous customs which prevailed in a darker age of the Church's history; and they thought that it would be soon altogether abandoned.

CHAP. VIII.

JOURNEY FROM NIJHNI NOVGORÒD TOWARDS KAZAN.

Aspect of the Country.— Brilliancy of the Night.— Modes of Travelling.— The Samovar.— Russian Villages.— Serfs.— Peasants. — Night Travelling.— The Crops.— Tea at a Village.

THE days were still hot, but the nights were cool, when we commenced our journey towards the Ural Mountains; and the sky, in which I had not indeed seen a cloud since descending the river Thames, early in June, save once during a squall in the Gulf of Finland, exhibited on all sides its wonted deep azure, save in the quarter where the sun was about to set.

The first town at which we were to make any stay, was the ancient Tatar city of Kazan. The traveller leaving Nijhni Novgorod, and taking an easterly course, will not be without lively anticipations concerning the objects of interest about to present themselves to his observation. The site of the great fair, and the Volga, form the western limit to which the merchants of the East travel to exchange their wares with those who come from the West; and a few only, among all the unshorn native merchants, have occasion to proceed eastward of this great place of exchange. Thus, we must expect to witness other scenes, and observe greater varieties of character, at the hearth of the people of different origin among whom we are about to travel, than those with which we are yet familiar. And, just in proportion as the darkness of the night enhances the

impressions which the "imagination bodies" into form, must the silence and indifference of the Russians concerning the vast territory which lies beyond the Ural Mountains, excite the curiosity of the traveller on his way to these remote parts of this empire.

The first part of our road lay across a country watered by streams which ran along the bottom of narrow vales, and which, as long as it was day, presented to us vast fields, redundant with ripening crops of the bread-corns. The streams, however, that water the country, lie so far beneath the surface of the plain, as to give all the inconveniences to a traveller, of a sharply undulated country, without its ordinary relief of picturesque scenes. The road, too, we found the roughest on which either of us had ever travelled in a wheeled carriage.

For the first two hours of the night, the stars, which shone with a brilliancy which might scarcely be surpassed in the tropics, lighted us upon our rapid way; and, after this, the moon in her third quarter, rendered the night almost as brilliant as the day. Notwithstanding the roughness of the road, we contrived to sleep at intervals; and, when daylight appeared, after two changes of horses, which we had made in the night, we were galloping over a rough and broad road, planted with double rows of birch trees upon either side, and through a plain country, abounding in corn-crops, but so divested of both useful and ornamental wood, save formal rows of planted trees, whose tortuous course might be traced for miles, as to present to us but a dreary prospect.

There are two ways of engaging horses in travelling in a private carriage in Russia. In one case, the traveller hires those which are provided every where by the government at proper stations; and, in the other, they are hired of the peasants at the villages, in-

differently, through which the road passes. But, such is the number of the horses and the plentifulness of their fodder in most parts of the country, that travellers generally prefer, as far, at least, as this state of things obtains, hiring of the peasants, with whom they make better terms than with the agents of the government; and this arrangement was made by my fellow-traveller.

Soon after sunrise we arrived at a small village, where we again changed; and, as the custom is, we breakfasted at the house of the peasants that provided us with fresh horses.

The first cry of a traveller in Russia, before alighting at the house of a peasant, with whom his bargain for his horses is usually already made, is for the *samovar*. This is what we should call a tea-urn; but it differs from our urn in the manner in which it is adapted for heating the water and maintaining it boiling. Instead of requiring that the water should be heated before it is put into it, and kept hot by means of a red-hot piece of iron, it is provided with a small grate, in which the fire is made beneath the body of the urn, by which means the water is heated and kept hot for as long a time as it is required. It is said that no Russian house is without this essential article. I met but one disappointment on this account, in any part of the country inhabited by people of Russian origin, throughout my travels. If the Russian *mujik* or peasant were to be without the *samovar*, it would indicate a degree of poverty which does not exist, or, at least, does not appear, in any part of the Russian empire inhabited by, or where the inhabitants are mingled with, men of the Sclavonic race.

When hot water is required, the *samovar* is placed outside the door of the house, and the traveller has scarcely time to refresh himself by the good practice of

bathing his hands and face, before the water is ready. The *samovar* is now brought into the house, and the tea is made as we are wont to make it; but usually the Russian tea-pot is of more liberal dimensions than ours. This same *samovar* is indeed so constantly called for, that, where there is much travelling, custom has established a price, even among the peasants, for its use, which is ten copecks, or about five-pence English; and this, indeed, is taken by those who would not receive anything from a traveller for a lodging and any quantity of viands he might consume in their houses.

Travellers in Russia always carry with them a liberal supply of tea and sugar; and such is the love of the Russians for the sober beverage, which the peasants cannot always obtain, that when we know that we shall not be allowed to pay for the viands we receive, the tea is often shared with the inmates of the house, by way of slightly compensating them for the solids consumed. The advantage, however, was generally so notoriously upon our side in this respect upon this journey, that very often we could not leave their houses with a good conscience, without forcing them to accept of an ounce or two of tea from our dry stock.

A Russian village is generally one of a number belonging to the same estate, and distributed throughout an extensive tract of country, through which it is probable one public road alone passes, upon which the better sort of the villages are situated.

Those which are at a distance from the public roads, several of which we had subsequently the opportunity of visiting, consist generally of very poor wood houses, set apart from one another, and possess no church. Those upon the main roads consist, for the most part, of two long rows of wood houses, between which the road passes, and have a church, at which the inhabitants assemble on Sundays from the surrounding

country. The houses of the better sort of these villages are also of wood; and it is rare to see a single one among them painted, unless it be that of a *zassidytelle*, or petty magistrate, in the village where he may happen to reside. In the greater part of these villages, the houses stand twenty or thirty yards from each other, the spaces between them being occupied in many instances by vegetable gardens, and in others by straw-yards, or sheep-folds, or put to other uses appertaining to the vocations of the tenants of the houses. The style of building is, for the greater part, uniform. The houses generally consist of one story, with a loft beneath a roof, and are almost always placed with their gable ends towards the road, and have the door in the yard. The reason for this arrangement of the streets and buildings of the village, which is also common in small towns, and in the suburbs of cities, is to stop the course of the flames during the fires which are more frequent, and commit more ravages, in Russia than in any other country in the world.

The roofs of the houses generally extend several feet beyond the end wall of the building, and beneath them there is usually a little railed gallery, with a door leading to it from the loft. This is sometimes a sleeping-room, and sometimes a work-room for the women. Owing to this manner of placing the building so far apart, a village which does not contain above a hundred or two inhabitants will often extend to the length of a verst; and many that do not contain a much greater population, reach to the length of between two and three versts.

The inhabitants of the villages which we visited in this part of Russia, were chiefly serfs, following the same occupation as the peasants in our rural districts. A few of these, however, and the greater part of the free men, when they are found in the villages, follow the vocations of mechanics and tradesmen.

We were, at this time, at too early a period in our journey to want any other necessaries from the peasants at whose houses we alighted than the contents of the *samovar*. The first of these dwellings into which we entered, gave us no very good opinion of the domestic comforts and cleanliness of the people. It consisted of two rooms, one of which was full of farm-yard implements; and in the other, in which we took our tea, there were several dirty women, and several very dirty children half naked, and about half a score of barn-door fowls.

I had been surprised at hearing, before our departure from Nijhni Novgorod, that it was the constant custom of the country to travel as well by night as by day, for which two reasons are given. In the first place, there are to be found no beds upon which travellers could sleep comfortably, and if they use their own, at the season we were travelling especially, they would soon find them in a condition that might endanger all future comfort during the journey. In the second place, the distances between towns and places in Russia are so great, that if the traveller were to arrest his progress during the nights, which, as they are rarely dark in high latitudes, is seldom necessary, it would seem as if a journey would never end. The first of these reasons, it was already clear, was well founded, and we did not require to be much longer acquainted with the country, before we had abundant reason to be satisfied in every respect with the advice we had received, and with the arrangements we had made for our journey. Thus, upon this first occasion of our stopping, as soon as we had well eaten of our travelling stock, and taken tea with the peasant's family, we gladly remounted our *tarantass*, and continued our way.

The country was still fine, and abounding in luxuriant

corn-crops. About mid-day, we attained an elevation which afforded us a noble view of the Volga, with more picturesque scenery than any that I had seen up to this time in Russia. The towns of Ostashikna and Makàrief appeared, seated in the midst of a rich plain, which was spread out before the view. The locality, too, is memorable, from its being the site upon which the great fair was held, until, as above mentioned, it was removed to Nijhni Novgorod.

We arrived at the little town of Ostashikna about two hours after noon. Here we observed two or three houses painted, which, from their rarity in the inferior towns and villages of Russia, we found refreshing to the sight; and there was a neat church, also painted. All this excess of luxury, we were told, was owing to the town being the place of residence of the proprietor of the estate upon which it stands, and of one of the *zassidytelli* of the district. We dined here, upon our own stock, at the house of one of the townsmen from whom we obtained our horses, in tolerable comfort; and, after but a short stay, continued our journey.

At dark, we arrived at the considerable village of Tschougouni, where we took tea, in company with a party of much cleaner people than those with whom we had breakfasted; and an Englishman could not be otherwise than much amused to see about half a dozen good women sitting over a tea-pot full of the Chinese beverage which we had handed them, in the attitude in which the worthy women of our country who re-whiten our linen, are said to sit over their tea, after their day's labour is accomplished. They had drawn two benches opposite to each other; and upon these they sat face to face, without any table between them, the greater part cross-legged, with the elbow of the right arm resting upon the upper knee, and

the saucer-full of tea upon the wide-spread fingers of the right hand, while, with their impatient mouths, they alternately ruffled the surface and sipped portions of the hot beverage so much prized by them, and happily not dear in this part of Russia.

CHAP. IX.

JOURNEY FROM NIJHNI NOVGOROD TOWARDS KAZAN: — CONTINUED.

The Tcherameese.—Their Condition in Russia.—Their Religion.—Manners.—Character of their Villages.—The State of their Knowledge.—Their Women.—Fertility of their Country.—Roads.—Tschébocksary, Tcherameese District Town.—Their Loyalty.—Rural Economy.—Horrid Roads.—Sandy Plain.—Meeting with a Russian Officer.—Town of Sviajsk.—A Pilgrim Pope.—Passage of the Volga.—Arrival at Kazan.—The Caravansary.

EARLY upon the morning of the third day of our journey we arrived at the first of the villages of the Tcherameese, a considerable people occupying some extent of territory in this part of Russia.

The Tcherameese are supposed to be a tribe of the Finnish race, before mentioned as one of the branches of the grand Caucasian family, and mixed since a remote period with the Tatars. Their language is a dialect of the Finnish, mingled with that of the Tatars; and they seem to have no affinity with the Russian race, which they neither resemble in feature nor disposition: and, like the Finns and the Tatars, they have never been subjected to the yoke of serfage.

The condition of this people, affords an extraordinary example of the tolerance and cosmopolite feelings generally prevailing in Russia. The religious and social institutions under which the Tcherameese live, are widely different from those of the Russians. In some particulars they are immeasurably inferior, while in others they are worthy of being copied, by the inhabitants of the rural

districts of other races, in many parts of the country. But neither is this peculiar race persecuted for practices which must shock their Christian and Moslem neighbours alike, nor imitated in the admirable economy apparent in all that concerns their daily pursuits. Though they dwell in the very heart of a Christian nation, and are politically under Christian government, and speak a language mingled with that of the Moslems, who are more easily scandalised than even Christians at the least approaches to idolatry, yet are they idolaters and sorcerers, addicted to practices that ought to be abhorrent to every rational creature. Among the most remarkable, however, of the superstitions with which their religion abounds, there is one from which they derive the same advantage which their neighbours of the other races obtain from exciting terror in the minds of those whom they cannot inspire with love; and, for our prince of darkness and that of the Moslems, with his "everlasting bonfire," they have the return of the spirits of bad men from the grave, which are continually engaged in tormenting the wicked upon earth.

But if we turn to the better side of their character, we shall find them remarkable for sobriety and industry, and for the propriety of their lives. In the external arrangements of their villages and their grounds, they even display an inclination towards the cultivation of the fine arts which has never entered into the heads of the light-hearted, and less steady and less thoughtful Sclavonian peasant. This difference in character, among the agriculturists in particular, of these two races is no doubt, to a certain extent, to be attributed to the one living at liberty to pursue only their own inclinations, while so large a proportion of the other are constrained by their perpetual servitude; but it is probable that it partly arises also from the difference of the natural temper and disposition of the two people. Cheerful-

ness and gaiety, with impatience of the steady pursuit of agriculture, distinguish alike the free and bond peasant of the Sclavonic race, while the Tcherameese of every grade are remarkable for their steady habits, and appear wedded to the soil which they cultivate.

The Russian villages are ever found in the bare plains, without a tree to shade them, or an elevation of the ground to break the uniformity which prevails, while the Tcherâmeese have chosen spots amidst the varied scenery and picturesque beauty of hill and dale and forest land, and have constructed their dwellings in the sheltered vales or upon the sides of the hills, and improved the natural scenery around them in a manner which is gratifying to behold. This village and its vicinity, presented the most agreeable scenery of any I had hitherto seen in Russia. The houses were placed without order, as regarded any streets or thoroughfares between them, but were nicely disposed amidst the rich verdure of groves of the lime, the oak, and the birch tree, and they did not fail to excite our liveliest interest.

After entering the village, we turned suddenly into the court of a spacious house, where our *yemstchick*, or driver, informed us we should be best able to deal for our horses. As we drew up here, several good men came out from the rooms which were around the court dressed in perfect tunics of white cotton and pantaloons or leggings similar to those worn by the aborigines of the forests of North America, and with mocassins on their feet made of strips of dried leaves, such as those of which we make our mats. They spoke the Russian language, but, as it appeared, very imperfectly. They addressed us, however, without making any inquiries of the *yemstchick*, demanding what were our wants; and, with the same breath, without waiting for a reply, they invited us to walk in and breakfast with them, to which we very readily consented.

We found the table, upon entering their apartment, already laid, and we sat down, in company with the father of the family and two young men who were his sons, to several dishes of meat, and "sterlit" fresh from the Volga. We had as much conversation with them as our time and our limited means of intercourse permitted; and they appeared to us to be intelligent, and very desirous of acquiring useful knowledge. If they are temperate in their habits, when placed in comparison with their fellow-subjects of the predominant race, they are a little less so when compared with the Moslems. Their strongest drink, however, is beer. They cultivate the hop, though some specimens we saw of that plant were indifferent and stunted. They appeared to be more successful, however, in their management of bees, if we might judge from some very good honey which composed a portion of this meal. But of their beer, of which we also drank, we did not think favourably.

Whatever may have been the migrations of the Finns, the Eastern origin of the Tcherameese is too deeply engraven on the features of their face, which as much resemble those of the Chinese as they do those of the Tatars, especially the eyes, to be mistaken for Caucasian.

Our good hosts here appeared a loyal people, and full of respect for the institutions under which they lived, without any such prejudices as we might expect to find among them, towards their brethren of the Sclavonic race. When we had finished our repast, and the chiboock that had been offered us, of which we took but as many puffs as we thought would save giving offence, we requested that, while the horses were preparing, we might be allowed to take a hasty survey of their premises, to which they consented, and we returned to the court for that purpose.

The style of the house, with its broad court, as we now more particularly perceived, was quite Eastern, and presented, perhaps a fine specimen of the taste which anciently prevailed, but which is now gone to decay, among this people. The gate of the court was adorned with laboriously carved ornamental work, but was not painted; and here and there, the corners of the buildings around the court, like the frieze of a temple in ruins, disclosed the degree of art which must have been attained by those by whom the work was performed. Their farming establishment, and their agricultural implements, we did not find equal the expectations that the appearance of the village and its vicinity had excited.

While we were examining some implements that lay strewed about the yard, several young women came into the court from a room opposite to that in which we had breakfasted, apparently prepared for the labours of the field. Acquainted years before with the customs of the Eastern nations in the seclusion of their women, I was not a little surprised to find these fair Tcherameese without any appearance of restraint. They approached us smiling, and, when spoken to, stood before us with their faces unveiled. Not one of them spoke the Russian language. Nevertheless, my companion contrived, by the aid of the men, to draw them into conversation. Their dress was precisely the same as that of the men, and their ornaments also, save four six-copek silver pieces which hung from the ears of the greater part of them. Their forms were delicate, and by no means indicated the subjection of their sex to constant labour in the open fields. Three out of six or seven of those we saw, however, were mere girls, and one of these had a sly, arch look, and seemed to us possessed of great beauty. In fact, we found their company so agreeable, that we endeavoured to make ourselves as

acceptable to them as we could in return, and we could not help flattering ourselves that we were successful.

But while we were enjoying this agreeable intercourse, we were suddenly summoned by the men to re-enter their apartment, to take more coffee and finish our chiboock. Whether this was a ruse to curtail the period of our gratification in the little interchange of thought and sentiment which we were able to carry on with their women, we could not judge, until we put some questions to the men while over our coffee, when we seemed to discover that we had at least bordered upon the limits set by Tcherameese ideas of delicacy to the intercourse of strangers with their women.

After sipping and puffing away another short quarter of an hour, we remounted our *tarantass*, and continued our journey, well satisfied with our first acquaintance with both the men and women of the Tcherameese race; and we thought we should be fortunate if we had any more such encounters during our passage through their territory.

As we advanced we found the country, though but indifferently cultivated, teeming with the same abundance as that which we had observed from the beginning, and presenting an agreeable aspect, with slight undulations, and some fine groves, which aided to vary the scene, and sometimes concealed the unsightly rows of the formal birch trees by which the road was still lined on both sides.

These tiresome lines of trees before noticed, whatever may have been the cause of their plantation, and whatever may be their effect to the eye, are however of great use at three out of the four seasons of the year. In summer, if the sun is on either side, the horses are constantly shaded. But when it is otherwise, where the road, as is often the case, makes a zig-zag course, the horses may, by changing sides at every angle, be

kept at all hours out of the sunshine; and so accustomed are they to profit by this advantage, where it may be obtained, that they require no guiding to find the shade. In winter, the trees cause the snow to accumulate, and form the sounder and more solid road. And in the spring, by the shade they afford, they keep the sledge-ways from breaking up before the sun has power enough to dry up the mud which succeeds the snow.

Soon after noon we reached the small district Tcherameese town of Tschébocksary. We found the good people with whom we dealt here for our horses as obliging and hospitable as our friends of the morning; and we dined with them upon fresh sterlit, of which no taste can tire, and an excellent dish of stchée; but we had not the pleasure of making the acquaintance of any of their women.

The room in which we dined here, which was particularly clean and neat, was adorned with portraits of the emperor and the empress by some village artist. That of the emperor was uncovered; but that of the empress, because, as they informed us, it hung in the apartment of the men, was veiled in gauze, in accordance with the still prevailing ideas of strict delicacy among these people. When we noticed the portraits, however, they did not hesitate to remove the gauze that covered that of the empress: and they were much delighted when I informed them that I had very lately seen both their majesties; and they inquired of me, with much interest, concerning the resemblance of the pictures to the originals. Both were, however, represented in the flower of youth; so that there was plenty of scope for accounting for the copies not being exactly like the originals as I saw them, without putting the good Tcherameese out of conceit with the cherished ornaments of their room, or injuring the reputation of the

village artist, who, as our host informed us, was living among them.

We had here a better opportunity than we had before had, of examining the implements of agriculture in use among these people; and we found them extremely rude. It might be almost said, of all we saw, that the cart-wheel alone indicated any application of the mechanical arts to the most important of all the labours of man. But this deficiency in the application of art, in the rural affairs of the country, is not peculiar to the villages of this race. Nothing, indeed, is more wanted in Russia than the improvement of agricultural implements generally. What can the Russian authorities or landlords everywhere be about, that they do not discover, or do not supply, this deficiency? Or do they wait till the sovereign issues an ukase to regulate the industry of the husbandman, by the just application of the arts to his various labours, which indeed would, in a few years, incalculably augment the wealth and strength of the empire? Could the possessors of the soil with its millions of stout and intelligent peasantry, throughout the land, catch but a spark of the agricultural enthusiasm of the more politic portion of our country gentlemen, it is impossible that they should fail of receiving the countenance of the government, and they would assuredly confer greater benefit upon their country than they yet have dreamed of. They have not, in any of their rural districts, the dull and unintelligent boor to deal with, who in many parts of Europe sets at nought every effort to raise his condition, and advance the interests of the country. Every where in Russia, the stranger, with all he can bring tending to advance the knowledge of the arts with which the people are acquainted, or to introduce any that are new to them, is cherished alike by all, except, indeed, such of the owners of the soil

as prefer the round of fashion in the capital cities of the empire, to the nobler pursuits that demand the residence, and an active life, on the part of the landlord among his tenantry.

I tried, while we were with these Tcherameese, through the aid of the merchant, who had a very slight acquaintance with rural affairs, to put into their heads some ideas that were certainly new to them. They showed great desire to profit by every hint they received, and the attention with which they listened to us, seemed proof enough of their ripeness for the adoption of every improvement that might be introduced into their system.

What we chiefly tried to impress was, the necessity, above all things, of the introduction of a better plough than that which they yet possessed; and I drew for them the form of one of the more simple description of those in use in England. But as they had no idea of putting iron to such uses as the share and the coulter are made to perform in a better system of husbandry, I fear they received as little benefit from this mode of instruction as from what was told them. I promised them, however, if they would make the essay, and do what they could with the best plough they could make, after the hints now given them, that, should I again pass through their country, about which there was some uncertainty, and find an improved plough in operation, I would certainly report this instance of their ability and true patriotism, if not to the original of one of the portraits we had just been admiring, at least to some one at the capital, or even at the court of their sovereign, that would probably take some steps to make their rude specimen of the important implement properly available. After this, we took leave of our second acquaintances among the Tcherameese with the same agreeable feelings with which we had left the first.

We had slept but little upon the night before that upon which we were now entering, and the state of the roads over which we had passed during the day, gave us no expectation of enjoying much rest during the hours that it was now almost necessary for us to repose. Those who have travelled over the worst roads in Western Europe, might still form but a faint idea of those which we found in this part of Russia. Sometimes they were torn up by the floods of rain, which had formed crooked and deep ruts for the passage of the water down the declivities on both sides of the narrow ravines that break the even surface of the plain, while the bridges over the ravines were constructed of mere logs or poles, laid across timber frames.

But the worst of the inconveniences arose from the deep ruts which were every where, on either side the bridges, formed by the water in finding its way into the stream beneath, and from the necessity of galloping down the declivities, to force the carriage upon the bridges, and, if possible, as is the constant Russian practice, to give it sufficient impetus to aid the horses in their efforts to mount the opposite ascent. Sometimes these ruts were so deep that large logs had been placed across them to prevent the carriage being brought to a stand, which, nevertheless, occurred more than once during the journey, when we were obliged to dismount, and literally put our shoulders to the wheel. And often our carriage fell with such force against the bridges, that it was unsafe to retain our accustomed reclining position, although we were seated upon mattresses laid upon a bed of straw. At one time, my fellow-traveller was so bruised in the back, as to be under the apprehension that he had received a permanent injury. We arrived, however, upon the morning of the fifth day of our journey, at the last Tcherameese village, without any other injury than that which proceeded from

want of rest. But, much as we were fatigued, we made no longer stay here than was necessary to refresh ourselves by a hasty meal.

Soon after again renewing our journey, we entered upon a sandy plain, for the passage across which we had provided ourselves with six horses, which were all placed abreast. Although this plain is inundated in the spring, the sand with which it is covered was now so loose and deep that our accustomed quick rate of driving was impossible; and such was the relief we found after the violent shocks we had experienced during the night, that we rejoiced in the very obstruction that impeded our progress, as it afforded us the opportunity of taking the repose we so much needed; and we had not proceeded far upon this plain before we both fell into a sound sleep.

Our repose, however, in less than an hour, was, as we thought, wantonly broken by a Russian officer whom we met travelling in a carriage similar to our own, and with the same number of horses. The officer, whether induced by curiosity, charity, or the common sympathy of travellers for one another, had ordered our *yemstchik* to stop; and upon being obeyed, after inquiring who was in the vehicle, and hearing that there were two foreigners, who were sound asleep, he had directed that we should be awakened, under the impression, as we thought afterwards, that we were shamming asleep to avoid observation.

When we were well awake, we had a few words of conversation with the disturber of our repose, which, doubtless, at least negatived any wrong impression he might have had concerning us; after which the two parties continued their journeys.

We now found ourselves in the midst of the wide plain, and passing by the town of Sviajsk, which is situated upon the table summit of a hill, as remarkable

as an oasis in the desert, and elevated far above the height to which the waters rise during the inundations of the Volga. Sviajsk is a walled town, of which the citadel and the convent are the most conspicuous objects. Our *yemstchik* here took advantage of the declivity of the hill upon which the town stands, to carry us over a portion of solid ground, which was some relief to our horses; but as we were not to change here, we halted but for a moment at the gate of the town, through which we perceived a straight street, in which neither man nor horse, nor anything in motion, was to be seen to relieve the gloom and solitude which seemed to reign within. After this, our delighted *yemstchik* was able to put his willing horses at full speed down the declivity, until we again encountered the sand.

An hour or two after this, we arrived at the ferry of the mighty Volga. There was nothing here but a few huts, occupied by those who kept the passage boat, which was now upon the opposite side of the river. After we had alighted, we had great difficulty in getting the horses and carriage across a deep bed of sand, which lay between the morsel of solid ground upon which the houses stood, and a little jetty which ran into the stream.

While we were waiting for the boat, and our *yemstchik* was preparing the vehicle and the horses for the passage, we were addressed by a pope, or secular priest, who came out of one of the huts, for the purpose of asking alms. As he was the first of his order, and indeed of any order, that I at least had seen in this humiliating condition in Russia, he excited my surprise, and I was anxious to know the cause of the situation in which he seemed to be. Those who have seen much of Italy, know well the character and the influence upon society of even the secular beggar of the clerical order, without reference to the lives and example of the idle and profligate mendicants of the convents; but on ac-

count of the novelty of the circumstance here, we were both unwilling to pass it by without at least making inquiries concerning the causes of it. But, before we asked any direct question, we reminded the pope that he was precisely in that position, as it appeared to us, which subjected him to transportation beyond the mountains that separate Russia from the penal settlement of Siberia. But we did the good man great wrong, as we soon discovered. At first, upon our remonstrance, he appeared much confused; but, afterwards he evinced great anxiety to exculpate himself from the dishonour which our allusion to the consequences to which he appeared to be subjected, seemed to throw upon him; and he expressed himself willing to satisfy us of the legality as well as necessity of the position he assumed.

This pope now informed us, that he resided even as far from where we found him as the vicinity of Moscow, and that he was upon a pilgrimage to Kazan, which he had undertaken on account of the following circumstances of his life past and present. He said he had married at the early age necessary to the priests in Russia, and that his wife and one of two children that she brought him, had died of the cholera the last time it ravaged Russia. The child, he said, that remained to him, was a girl; and, such was his anxiety for her life, that upon the first news of the approach of the cholera, which was now raging in the south of Russia, he had conceived the idea of making a pilgrimage bare-foot to one of the convents of Kazan, where there was an especially holy picture of the Virgin, in the hope of obtaining the intercession of the Queen of Heaven for the security of his child against the rapidly advancing pestilence. He had, however, already suffered so much from wounded feet, that although now only a few hours' journey from Kazan, he had been obliged to remain here until he had exhausted the stock

of necessaries which he brought from the last convent, and had thus become under the necessity of soliciting our aid.

As there could be no doubt whatever of the truth of the pope's story, we did not hesitate to offer him some money. But this he refused, requesting us to give him rather a little meat or bread, if we had any. Nevertheless, upon our informing him that we carried no provisions with us, since we found such abundance everywhere, he accepted just as much money as would enable him to lay in stock enough, by purchasing of the ferrymen, to carry him to Kazan.

After this pious pilgrim had thanked us very warmly, he promised to intercede with Heaven for our safety during the arduous journey which we had undertaken to accomplish. We did not, however, leave the good pope in this condition, before we had made an attempt to impress upon him our own opinion, that if he would finish his journey in our carriage, in which there was abundance of room, the Virgin would receive his petition, as favourably as if he made the rest of his journey upon his wounded feet. He did not, indeed, appear shocked at our proposition; but, after thanking us for the offer, he said that the prosecution of his intentions was doubly obligatory, since it was commenced; and that any turning aside from his purpose now, might rather subject him to the censure, if not the vengeance, of the Virgin, than tend to obtain her intercession in his behalf. It was impossible not to respect his reasoning, and therein approve his resolution.

After we had been nearly an hour detained, the boat for which we had been waiting returned, and we embarked, with our six horses and carriage, and with the blessing of the good pope, for the opposite shore.

The Volga is here about a mile in breadth, and is very rapid in its course; and we were more than two

hours in passing it, owing to its being necessary to row a mile up the stream before the boat may with advantage encounter the full force of the current of the great river.

The weather was fine, and the temperature of the atmosphere was high, while we were on the water; but the natural scenery on both sides of the river was desolate, and a very little relieved by the spare appearance of the works of men in the cultivation of the soil, or by the dwellings of inhabitants along the river's banks. Upon the bosom of the waters one object alone beyond the rail of our own bark, broke the solitude and silence of the ever-flowing stream. A large vessel, on her inland voyage from the Caspian Sea to the active seat of commerce we had so lately visited, was slowly stemming the current under one enormous square sail, and with the wind immediately at her stern.

Upon landing, we took some refreshment while the carriage was preparing, after which we continued our journey.

Our road was still across a plain, like that over which we had passed upon the opposite side of the river, with but little intermission of sand or rude sterility, until we came within sight of Kazan a little before sunset, at the distance of three or four versts.

The ancient city, once the capital of the Tatars, by whom it was constructed, stands upon the first rising ground of the slightly elevated country which marks the bounds of the lower lands which border the Volga, and affords a highly agreeable and picturesque object to contemplate as the traveller approaches it by the side of the plain. Its ancient Kremlin, with its Tatar towers and its gilded Christian spires still mingled with the minaret of the Moslem temples of worship, is seen rising above its white walls, and forming altogether an object of moral interest far above that which proceeds from the immediate external beauty which it exhibits.

Immediately before reaching the town, we passed a large pyramidal monument, which will demand a further notice, in company with what is most remarkable within the walls of this ancient city.

Upon our reaching the upper part of the town, we drove directly into the court of a caravansary, or large hotel, which is the general rendezvous of the merchants passing east and west of Kazan during their sojourn in this city.

This caravansary of Kazan was full of life when we entered it, and of interest from the character of the scenes which it presented. Both the court and the building were spacious, and arranged with a considerable degree of order. On one side, were refreshment rooms for the conductors of the waggons of the merchants, and the apartments of the family by whom the resting-place was kept, all upon the ground floor, and a respectable *restauration*, as the Russians call a public dining-house, after the German corruption of the French term, upon the floor above; and throughout the rest of the court were lines of store-rooms upon the ground floor for the goods *in transitu*, and, above these, all the sleeping chambers for the travellers.

At the moment we arrived, some parties from the countries far east of us were unloading their waggons to store their goods, in order to afford repose to their horses before attempting the passage of the sandy plains over which we had just passed, and others from the west were making the same preparation for a night's rest after the fatigues of the same journey that we had just accomplished. Busy Tatars and Kirguise from beyond the Ural Mountains, were mingled with Russians, all clad in their various costumes of the Tatar tunic and the Kirguise and Russian sheep-skins; while here and there stood a straight figure in the dignified caftan, puffing the chiboock, or giving direc-

tions to the parties occupied with the disposition of the various objects of merchandise which were spread about the court.

My companion, as it has been mentioned, had despatched several waggons from Nijhni Novgorod, loaded with the merchandise with which he was about to commence his speculations in Siberia, under orders to await our arrival here; and he had been during the journey, under some alarm concerning the safety of his property. The waggons might have broken down where they could not be easily repaired; robbers might have plundered them; the men to whose care they were entrusted, notwithstanding the security of the passport, of which I confess I now saw the use for the first time, might have deserted him. But after these gloomy forebodings, he now found all his wares under the safe keeping of locks and iron bars, and his men only waiting the arrangements to replace the horses they had brought thus far, in order to continue their journey.

As we proposed to stay a few days at Kazan, we now chose our chambers, which, though the best that were to be had, were small, and had nothing within their bare walls save contrivances for bedsteads, consisting of some planks laid upon cross-sticks. Nevertheless, we were thankful for any quarters where we could sleep again in stillness; and we had our own beds transported to our rooms, and retired at an early hour, in the good hope of enjoying a night's undisturbed repose.

CHAP. X.

KAZAN.

Character.— Population.— Importance.— Arts.— Manufactures.— Divisions of the Town. — Tatars. — Russians. — Illness of the Travellers. — German Baron. — English Student. — A German Professor.—A Danish Architect.—Alarm of the Citizens at the Approach of the Cholera.

KAZAN, which was for several centuries the capital city of the Tatars throughout their possessions in Russia, was still retained by these semi-barbarians until 1552, when it was finally subdued by Ivan IV. It is now an important city of the Russian empire, with a population of about 45,000 inhabitants, nearly one-third of whom are Tatars, who are living tranquilly under the tolerant sway of the Russian Government. It stands, as we have seen in our approach to the city, upon the ground immediately raised above the lower plain of the Volga, and about six or seven versts from the banks of that river. It is the seat of the government of the department of the same name, and of an archbishopric, and also of one of the four principal universities of the empire. It is rather known, indeed, at the present day as a seat of literature and science, than as a military post. It has an observatory, a botanical garden, a museum of natural history, and a public library, besides two gymnasiums, a school for the instruction of youths intended for the church, two other public schools, and also a military school.

Kazan is also the seat of several manufactures, which

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are esteemed throughout Russia. It is famous, in particular, for its soap, of which we saw great quantities at Nijhni Novgorod, and scarcely less so for its cotton and woollen stuffs, and for its hardware and earthenware, and gunpowder. It has also, both a Russian and a Tatar printing-office, which are chiefly employed in the production of books for religious instruction, according to the faith of the two races that divide the town, and all of which, as I was assured, were studiously kept free from controversy.

But though the Tatars and Russians live here in the best possible fellowship, and though, politically and commercially speaking, there exist no differences or jealousies between them, their difference in character, manners, and religion, has naturally placed them apart from each other in the quarters of the town which they severally inhabit. Thus this celebrated city has become, both physically and morally, divided into two parts. The upper part is on a level with the Kremlin, and is almost exclusively inhabited by the Russians, and contains all the public edifices and churches. It is, like all Russian towns, laid out with remarkable regularity, and it has several new streets, now forming, of elegant houses constructed of stone; and at this time an extensive new building was erecting to replace its *Gostinnoi Dvor*, or bazaar, which had been lately destroyed by fire. There are no less, also, than forty churches in this part of the town, including those belonging to eight convents. It has also a market abundantly supplied with the ordinary articles of consumption from a fertile and well-cultivated district around the city, as well as with fish from the Volga.

The lower town is almost exclusively inhabited by the Tatars, who have eight mosques. This quarter is less grand or elegant, though more picturesque, or more novel to the eye of a stranger from Western

Europe, than the upper town, as we shall presently have an opportunity of observing.

The church, which is the most esteemed in Kazan, is that of the *Karsianskaya Royeniater*, or Holy Church of the Virgin of Kazan, which is one of the most venerated of all the Christian temples throughout Russia, on account of its having formerly contained that holy picture of the Virgin which now sanctifies the Cathedral of Kazan at St. Petersburg.

The hopes which the travellers had had of a comfortable night's rest upon arriving at Kazan were sadly disappointed. We both, indeed, passed a restless night; and my companion was feverish and decidedly unwell in the morning. But as we were equally anxious to set about our particular occupations—the merchant to make his arrangements for the despatch of his waggons, and myself to visit the chief objects of interest in the town—we had both risen and taken our coffee at an early hour, and were now engaged in my apartment in settling our plans, when the landlord of the hotel came to bring us some welcome news, as he deemed it must needs be, in informing us, that there was an Englishman, a professor in the university here, residing in the town.

My intention had previously been, to wait as soon as possible upon the governor, but on receiving this information I determined to call first upon the professor; and as my companion had some letters of introduction to present to merchants residing, as we heard, in the same quarter of the town as my countryman, we set out together to make our several visits.

After passing some gardens, with beds of trained shrubs and avenues of large trees, we came to an entirely new and evidently growing portion of the town, where we found the house in which the Englishman dwelt. It was, as most dwellings are wont to be in Russian towns, very large; and we were directed by

some women, who appeared to inhabit the lower rooms, to ascend to the first floor to find my countryman's apartments. Arrived here, we found the door of a large room standing half open; and, as there appeared to be no bell, and no one answered when we tapped, we supposed that there must be a suite of rooms, and we walked directly into that which appeared to be the first of them; and, after waiting here a little while and seeing nobody, we passed into another apartment, of which we perceived the door also partly open, after giving the same notice of our intention as before. While we were in this second room, however, the door of a third opened, and a gentleman in a morning gown made his appearance, and with too much politeness to wait for any question, bade us be seated, and in such good English as to leave no doubt upon my mind that we had met the professor; and I began to speak with him of general matters without even making the inquiry. We had not, however, long conversed after the first compliments were passed, before I perceived by a slight German accent in some particular words which our new acquaintance used, either that I must be in error regarding the person, or that the landlord of the caravansary, not perhaps being very well acquainted with the geographical and philological divisions of Western Europe, had mistaken a German for an Englishman; and, upon my asking the question, my doubts were immediately set at rest by the gentleman presenting his card, when we perceived that we were conversing with a German Baron. We learned, however, from the Baron, that we had not, nevertheless, been misdirected, and that the Englishman of whom we were in search occupied a part of this same suite of apartments, but that he was not then within.

After this interview with the polite German, we returned to our hotel, but not to follow up the plans

we had severally laid down; for towards the middle of the day, when the heat was excessive, we found our restless night had been but the forerunner, in both our cases, of decided fever.

We were not at first aware, though we soon afterwards learned, that we were, however, only in the ordinary condition of travellers in the interior of Russia, who rarely escape an attack of fever commencing between the fourth and tenth day of their journey, and which usually endures from three to ten, but sometimes for twenty days, yet is rarely attended with fatal consequences. Even the *feld-jägers*, which are the Government couriers between the distant parts of the empire, who make the longest journeys in an incredibly short space of time, and who are, moreover, men chosen for their strength of constitution and hardihood, and to whom travelling is the sole occupation of their lives, seldom escape this visitation, and are even often attacked as early as the third day of their journey. It was not wonderful, therefore, that we should experience the common fate of Russian travellers. My companion's case was much the worst of the two, both in regard to our sickness and our position. I was able to lie down immediately, while the pressing nature of the merchant's affairs induced him to pass the day among his waggons of goods, which he was anxious to despatch, until the evening brought with it a degree of fever which obliged him to take to his bed in earnest, without a hope of rising for several days.

The second day after our arrival, the Englishman of whom we had been in search on the previous morning paid me a visit. I had arisen with some of the fever of the previous day remaining, and upon finding my fellow-traveller unable to leave his bed, and as nothing required my attention, I had placed myself upon my bed again, when my countryman made his appearance.

The Englishman did not enter, as most foreigners are wont, without knocking and receiving an invitation so to do; but I had no sooner replied to his notice, than the door of my room opened, and for the professor that I had painted in my mind, with the spirit of man expressed in visible lines of thought upon his forehead, in marched a student, as he early informed me, of the Oriental tongues, with the air of a dandy, and seemingly of about two-and-twenty years of age.

I was, at the moment my countryman entered the room, sitting upon my bed, supported by a pillow at my back, with a bear-skin about my shoulders to keep off the draughts of wind that passed between the door and the window, and with a fur cap upon my head. The dandy was dressed, though not in the newest, yet in the once highest fashion of the *petit maître* of the *Champs Elysées*. His stature was low, but very erect; and as soon as he had reached half-way between the door, which the servant that had brought him to my room was in the act of closing, and my bed-side, he stopped, raised his head as high as he could stretch it, and, placing the gilded top of a cane which he held in his hands under his chin, asked me whether I was the Englishman that had called upon him the day before. To this I replied, that if he were living with the German Baron, whose name I at the same time mentioned, I had yesterday waited upon him, and had been disappointed in not seeing him before I was attacked by the fever, under which I was now suffering. "I have come then," said the student, "to inquire what business you may chance to have with me." "As to business," I replied, "I have in effect none. I did myself the pleasure of calling upon you, merely under the impression that, at this distance from England, any little intercourse between us would have been mutually advantageous or agreeable." "Why," then said the

young man, "it might have been so; but I have not much leisure apart from my studies, and I am so frequently at the governor's, where I dine to-day, that I have not much time to engage in the ordinary topics of conversation." "I must then," I replied to this, "be much indebted to you for this visit."

This short colloquy was nearly all that passed between two native Englishmen, of whom there were none other in the town—one of them at the place of his abode, and the other a stranger wrapped in the skins of beasts, and stretched upon a feverish bed.

The last speech, indeed, of the young man was not likely to provoke more than the formal reply which I gave to it. After this, the student of Oriental languages paced the room for a few minutes with the air of a midshipman left alone upon the quarter-deck of a ship of war at her moorings. Then after pulling out his watch, he started and said, "The governor is by this time expecting me. I generally see his excellency at this hour in the morning. I must take my leave." And I must say, I have seldom myself pronounced good-bye! in answer to good-bye! with more pleasure than on the present occasion.

On the third day of our sojourn at Kazan, the merchant was still in bed with increased fever; but my own condition was now sufficiently improved to allow me to perform the part of nurse to my fellow-traveller. At intervals, too, I thought myself well enough to walk in the gardens already mentioned, which were within a hundred yards of our quarters.

During my promenade, I did not meet a single living creature; and there was nothing to contemplate here, save some lines of tall trees, and some badly laid out shrubberies, where the once-trained luxuriance of nature had been left to fall into neglect. There was hardly, therefore, sufficient to relieve the

ennui of one not wholly free from fever, and confined during the greater part of the day to the sick room of another.

The fourth day brought an unexpected change, and reversed the condition of the travellers. After a restless night, I found myself in so high a fever as to render it imprudent to rise, while my companion had so much improved, as to act now the part for me that I had been able to perform for him upon the previous day, as well as to attend to his affairs, and happily to despatch his waggons, which had been waiting for the completion of the necessary arrangements for the journey.

The next day, however, once more reversed the condition of the sick men; and I was now better than I had been since the day of our arrival, while my friend was so alarmingly ill as to induce me to insist upon his seeing a medical man, which had not before been thought of by either of us.

The fever, in both our cases, was in fact intermittent; and we passed thirteen days at Kazan in this miserable condition, from the effects of the roads over which we had previously passed, before we were both sufficiently well to continue our journey. And, during all this time, I was occupied but a single day in the examination of the remarkable monuments of the town. I was not even able to pay the proper compliment of calling upon the governor, which I regretted the more, from the estimation in which we heard that his excellency was held.

Two gentlemen, however, whom I have not yet mentioned, came during our helpless condition to visit us; and from them we heard, that every one was alarmed at this moment at the appearance of any disease, on account of the rather delicate state of the public nerves from the known approach of the cholera, which had already arrived at the point at which the Don and the

Volga make the nearest approaches to each other, in its destructive course towards the great Russian cities.

To one of these gentlemen, who was a German, and a professor of English and German literature at the University of Kazan, I was indebted for one or two visits at moments snatched from his leisure hours, and for such information as I shall make use of in putting down a few remarks concerning this ancient Tatar capital; and, to the other, who was a native of Denmark, and an architect, I was indebted for civilities in the character of *cicerone* for the single day that I was able to spend in the inspection of the town.

CHAP. XI.

KAZAN.

Monuments.— Pyramidal Mausoleum.— Streets.— Tatar Quarter. — Mosque.— Mussulman Worship.— Tower.— Statue of the Russian Poet Derscharvinse.— Preparations for Departure.— Opinion concerning the Cause of the Cholera.

Upon the morning of the day on which I thought myself sufficiently well to accept the offer of the Danish gentleman to act as my guide in exploring the town, I sent a note, at an early hour, to report my better condition to my obliging friend, who in a few minutes' time drove into the caravansary with a handsome droshky, drawn by a pair of beautiful cream-coloured ponies, which it may be mentioned, in passing, were of the value, in this part of Russia, of 18*l.* sterling each.

We first drove out of the town, to visit the monument already mentioned as attracting the first attention of the traveller arriving in the vicinity of this city from the opposite side of the Volga. The weather was now as brilliant as it had been upon the preceding days; but the wind in the plain, at the early hour at which we drove across it, was chilly; and I was obliged to avail myself of the winter wrappings which were in the droshky, and without which no carriage, at any season, leaves the streets of a town in this part of the country.

The monument is about three versts from the town. It consists, as already said, of a pyramidal building, though not constructed exactly after the plan of those

from which the name of this form of mausoleum is derived. It terminates in a flat summit about a fifth or sixth of its height from the point at which the angles would have met to form its apex, had it been in the figure of a perfect pyramid. The character of the building, indeed, is further varied from that of the true pyramid by four elegant porticos, with sculptured devices over them, apparently representing scorpions, and beneath every one of which there are three doors. The monument was erected only about twenty-five years ago, to commemorate the victory of Ivan IV. over the Tatars, and the final triumph of the Russians over their ancient enemies, which followed the fall of Kazan. It is surrounded with iron rails with stone supports, and its pyramidal portion rests upon a solid base of stone, which is ascended by steps at its four sides. We entered it by a door beneath one of the porticos, which conducted us to a small chapel, which we found very plainly and appropriately decorated. From this we descended to the depository of the mouldering remains of the heroes departed, which had been removed from another tomb, formed of wood, when this was erected. This was a mere charnel-house, in which tons of the remains of mortality were thrown into heaps, and left uncovered with earth. In the midst of these, there was a sarcophagus containing many remains of that more enduring part of our bodily substance which "some suppose the soul's frail dwelling-house;" all of which were doubtless better left to perish with the rest, since it is the supreme will that they should return some day to dust, and since we may hope that those that are gone are well rid of all that encumbered them in their mortality.

If we were to reflect upon the consequences of the more or less prevalent practice almost every where, of preserving the remains of the dead, how many gross

superstitions that have existed in the world, might we not trace to this error of men, in refusing to accept the plain evidence of the senses concerning the separation of the spiritual from the material portion of us, as the beginning of a state of existence in which we shall have no need of material substance, or at least, of such as that with which we are here clothed, either for our identity or for our enjoyments. Were it not better then, wholly to disconnect our thoughts of the future from the perishable portion of the spirit's first habitation?

After this little inspection of the monument in the plain, we drove back to the town, where we first visited the Tatar quarter, for the purpose especially of inspecting a new mosque which had been just completed by my worthy guide himself. The new temple of Mahommedan worship stands near the centre of this portion of the town, which, as before mentioned, is almost exclusively inhabited by the Moslems, who, whatever may be their theological errors, are existing evidences of the moral tone of which their race is susceptible when under equal laws, and, at the same time, of the temper of the Russian people, and of the wisdom and sense of moral right, which has, since the cessation of religious wars in the north of Europe, so eminently distinguished the rulers as well as the masses of the Sclavonian race.

The streets, as we drove slowly through this quarter, presented little that was worthy of remark, apart from the style of the buildings, which, as might be expected, partakes about equally of the bold and open character of that of all Russian edifices, and the close and confined style, with the neglect of exterior ornament, which the terror of tempting the avarice of the powerful, with an especial tenderness for, or jealousy of, the women, has in Eastern countries made almost universal. The

houses, too, are almost all low; and those which partake most of the Eastern character have in general close courts. Being, moreover, all built of wood, and ill-painted, or not painted at all, they have, for the most part, a slovenly, and, in the lesser streets, even a dirty appearance. And add to this, that, as much less care has been bestowed upon the carriage portion of the streets here, than upon that of the streets of the upper town, the quarter has this additional disadvantage.

The living scenes in the streets here appeared dull to a Western European. In the road-way, we saw but a few small and rough carts, drawn by ill-fed horses. Upon the wooden *trottoirs* sat groups of the Moslems puffing their chiboocks; and a few children, ill-clad, were playing about the doors. The greater part of the men saluted us as we passed, by putting their right hands to their breasts or foreheads, after the graceful Eastern manner; and several, whom my Danish friend informed me, had aided the construction of the mosque by their money or their labour, arose, and completed the salaam of Moslem to Moslem, by accompanying the action of the hand with words signifying, "God be with you."

The paucity of the numbers of women to be seen in the streets of all properly Mussulman towns, is not so remarkable in this quarter of Kazan; and the traveller misses their absence the less here, since the Russians themselves, if we except those of the Northern capital, and some of other towns where the native manners are thought most corrupted by foreign intercourse, are not without what we should consider a peculiar sense of delicacy regarding the exposure of their women to the gaze of strangers. Some of the fair Tatars, of almost all ages, we here saw in the streets; and they were assuredly not all either devoid of a certain consciousness of their charms, or of a sense of the right of foreigners

to admire them. One or two, with the prettiest coquetry in the world, as we passed slowly by, let fall the flimsy veils which covered but half their faces, and certainly exhibited, with their bright brown skins, such jet black and brilliant eyes, as might endanger the peace of a whole city, were they permitted to sparkle at a Christian *soirée.*

When we came in sight of the new mosque, a short colloquy took place between its builder and myself, which arose from some remarks that my friend thought it necessary to make, on account of what he had heard of the religious character of the English people generally; and what passed between us I feel bound to report.

"There is a little ceremony required, on the part of a Christian and Mussulman alike, upon entering a Moslem temple of worship," said the worthy Dane, "which possibly may not be agreeable to you to comply with; and this," he added, "is more especially necessary at this moment, as I perceive by the boy upon the minaret, who serves the place of the bell in the tower of the Christian church, that it is already the hour of prayer.—It is necessary that we should remove our shoes from off our feet before entering the building."

Now it has happened to be my fate to visit people professing many of the religions of the world; and, notwithstanding the mere absurdities with which some of these abound, they have all seemed to me, in proportion to their degrees of refinement, through a clearer or darker medium, as well in the exultations of the untutored Indian, "who sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind," as with the most refined societies of Christian men, essentially to teach the duties of man both to his Creator and to his fellow-man. Thus I have learned to respect the sincere worship of every people, and to consider every temple, whether it be the humble wigwam beside the lofty pine, or the grass hut

under the shade of the palm, or the magnificent edifice of a Christian or Mahommedan metropolis, equally dedicated to the common Creator, who has not enlightened all men alike. I therefore informed my considerate guide, that I could conscientiously, and would very willingly, conform to this usage, and, indeed, that I had often before conformed to the usages of the Mussulmans, who really derive their system, however corrupt the channel through which it may have passed, from the same sources as the more civilised nations derive all the religious knowledge they in effect possess.

When we drew up at the step which led to the entrance of the new Moslem temple, we found several of the worshippers of Allah sitting upon the landing of the steps, and one or two standing upon the pathway before the front of the mosque. Those who were above, I subsequently heard, were some who, under a certain consciousness of error, deemed themselves unworthy to enter the sacred edifice; and they remained seated, and apparently engaged in contemplation or prayer, while those who were below came and aided us to alight from our carriage, and seemed pleased to see the builder of their temple.

Upon ascending the steps, we found them strewed with shoes; and after removing our own, we entered the mosque.

Every one knows the character of the interior as well as the exterior of a Moslem temple of worship, from the simpler of which, this presented no variation. A carpet, which entirely covered the floor, and a reading-desk, were its only articles of furniture; and there was not within its walls a symbol of spiritual or material Being in any form whatsoever. The architecture of the building, as well within as without, was in chaste keeping with the Mussulman idea of the unity of the Deity, and, indeed, seemed to me a specimen in style,

that would be likely to suit the chastening taste of the present age among ourselves. Not an audible word was uttered within the edifice while we were present, and it seemed to me, as the worshippers, seated upon their mats, or kneeling and bowing their heads till their foreheads touched the ground, with their faces turned towards the direction of Mecca (which was indicated, as with the Arabs, merely by a niche in the wall), that the Christian who could contemplate his fellow-man thus engaged, without agreeable emotions, must have sadly neglected the cultivation of that charity which his religion so strongly enjoins.

We ascended, after this, to the chief tower of the mosque, which presented to us a fine view of the town and its ancient fortress, and beyond this a broad expanse of the plains around, in the midst of which the great river was seen at intervals of its tortuous course, sparkling between alternately green and sterile banks, like a great chain of lakes, under the reflected rays of the noonday sun.

From the Tatar quarter, we drove back to the upper town, and alighted in one of the public places, in order to view a monument erected in honour of the Russian Poet Derscharvinse, which had been completed and thrown open since our arrival in Kazan. It consists merely of the statue of the poet placed upon a pedestal of galvanic plastic, and the name in Russian characters, with the date, 1846, which was that at which the statue was set upon the pedestal. And this best epitaph of every man of sufficient celebrity to render his memory dear to his country, is as creditable to the taste, as the monument itself to the estimation of merit, possessed by the Russians.

I could not help here calling to mind the curious instance of desecration or perverted taste, to be seen among ourselves in the inscription upon the pedestal of

the monument of the greatest of all bards in all time, in Westminster Abbey, where the passage taken from the poet, which figures to the imagination the airy nothing that will be left after the dissolution of "this great globe, and all that it inhabit," by the simile of a fleeting cloud, not remaining behind, is shorn alike of its grandeur and its propriety, by the substitution, for this noble figure, of that of the remnant of a stranded vessel after a sea-storm.

The day after this tour, it was my fate to be the obstacle to our departure from Kazan, from the cause that had hitherto detained us. On the thirteenth day after our arrival, however, and the first of the month of September, we were both well enough to obey the mandate of the physician; and we passed the morning in making preparations for recommencing our journey the same evening.

We were both already tolerably armed; but the accounts which we heard here of the occasional boldness of some straggling robbers upon the opposite side of the Ural Mountains especially, induced us to consider the necessity of augmenting our means of self-defence. Nevertheless, such is the state of the law in Russia regarding combats between honest people and rogues, that it is always a matter of question with travellers, whether it is prudent or imprudent to carry any arms whatsoever. As the law stands, indeed, a traveller's position may become greatly embarrassing, and doubly dangerous, without an extraordinary amount of coolness. Thus, be his life ever so precious, or his property valuable, before he may resist his assailants he must count their number; for unless he should actually be opposed by at least three against one, which, in case of the flight of all the rogues he might leave alive, it would be difficult to prove, he cannot kill the most determined robber he may meet, without incurring the highest

penalty of the law. However, as we found a weapon, which indeed was a favourite one of mine, the tomahawk, was to be had in Kazan, we both made this addition to our arms, and each loaded one of our pistols with goose shot only, that at least we might not expose ourselves to such consequences, unless life itself were immediately at stake.

The alarm concerning the cholera was very great at the time we were preparing to leave Kazan. News had the day before arrived, of the dreaded pestilence having reached Seratow, about three or four hundred versts further down the river, where a brother of the Governor of Kazan, with a member of his family, both of whom had left this but a few days before, quite free from apprehension, had fallen victims to the disease, and, that about 350 souls a-day were dying in that vicinity.

We found an opinion prevalent here, that the mysterious cause of the disease was an insect wholly invisible, which swept along the surface of streams. I thought when I first heard of this, that the impression probably proceeded from some of the conjectures of men of science in Europe. We ascertained, however, that this opinion was entertained by the inhabitants of the coast of the Caspian Sea, and that the Tatars had received it as an indisputable fact from the Persians passing up the Volga, in their voyages to Nijhni Novgorod.

CHAP. XII.

JOURNEY FROM KAZAN TO THE URAL MOUNTAINS.

Tatar Villages. — Aspect of the Country. — Health of Travellers. — Forests. — Party of Exiles. — Peasants. — Ravines. — Government of Perm. — Improvement of Roads. — Artificial Lights. — Peasants' Houses. — Arrival at Perm. — Characteristics of the Russians. — The city of Perm. — An Anglo-Dane. — Departure from Perm. — Aspect of the Country. — Cranberry of the Ural. — Iron Manufactories. — Commerce of the District. — The Ural Mountains. — Aspect. — Forests. — Animals. — Mineral Productions. — Sources of Rivers. — The Travellers' Impression of Russia.

THE weather was still hot upon the day that we left Kazan, and the heat continued during the earlier part of the night. We stopped to breakfast at an early hour, on the first morning of our journey, at the small Tatar town of Meteski Malié. As it was very early, we saw but a few men in the streets, and no women. After this, we passed through another Tatar village called Kowdausaw, situated in a vale, and composed of neat log dwellings. At one o'clock we passed a third Tatar village, called Iangulovskaia, situated in a wide valley between hills of little elevation.

Though these villages are prettily situated, and have an air of neatness within, the total absence of women in the streets renders them gloomy to the stranger at all hours. Even where there were boys playing, there were no girls; as if all our species had been of one sex. We noticed in these, as well as in several other Tatar villages, very frequent instances of inflamed eyes among

the men, and several of blindness; but we could not hear of any opinion prevalent concerning the cause of this.

The country, that we had found slightly undulated since we left Nijhni Novgorod, every where save in the narrow plain of the Volga, was now more hilly; and it increased in natural beauty as we proceeded. At three o'clock, we obtained a distant view of two Tatar villages, one of which lay at the foot of a hill we were descending, and the other upon the declivity of the opposite hill, and out of our track. The view from this hill was more gratifying than any of the mere rural prospects we had before seen, on account of the greater undulations of the ground here, than in any part of the country through which we had passed.

About five o'clock we arrived at the district town of Malmish, which being the border town of the proper Tatar country, is inhabited as well by Russians as Tatars. Between six and seven o'clock, we passed the River Viatka, and at nine we supped at Maletskaia.

I confess, when we left Kazan to renew our journey, with the fatigues which we heard we had still to expect from the same causes from which we had already suffered so much, I was sceptical concerning the motives and the virtue, of the doctor's advice, by which we were hurried away, and much disposed to think it proceeded from his desire to get all the invalids out of the town before the cholera arrived; but the spirits we had enjoyed during the past day, and the evident improvement in our state of health, already proved this suspicion to have been unfounded and illiberal. We had very little rest, nevertheless, during the second night of our journey, on account of the state of the roads, which was precisely the same as we had before experienced. But, at an early hour we breakfasted at Moukikaksinskaia.

Upon resuming our journey we entered a pine forest, which occupied two hours in passing. After this, we found some improvement in the roads, which were again planted with birches, of which we had seen but few in the Tatar country; and we took advantage of the opportunity offered us for an hour or two's sleep.

We were now in what is called the Vodiaqui country, which we still found abounding more or less in woods as we proceeded. Soon after noon we reached the village of Kajilskaia, situated in a romantic valley, and possessing a neat painted church. There were, however, very few signs in the fields here of the labour of an intelligent or industrious people, and we found still less of comfort or plenty within the house that we entered. Nothing, certainly, invited us to take a meal here, except our appetites. These however, as our state of health was hourly improving, had already become very good, and were little disposed to be fastidious; so that, without great anxiety concerning the quality of the viands we might find, as we were to change here, we requested the peasants, who seemed more indifferent to our wants than most of those we had previously met, to give us anything with which they might happen to be provided. We were doomed, however, to some disappointment; for they had nothing to bring us but blue-berries, and eggs of which their whole stock was but two, and which proved such as were fit only for travellers nearer the point of starving than we were.

After this, we entered another forest, which continued, with occasional settlements formed precisely like those in our new districts in Canada, where houses are built in the centres of square patches of cleared land in the woods, until we arrived in the evening at Sumisimojginskaia, where we supped at a late hour upon a brace of partridges which we had bought from

some peasant sportsmen that we chanced to meet upon the road.

After again resuming our journey, we overtook a party of exiles upon their march towards Siberia. There were thirty men on foot in chains, and five women, and several men in waggons; and they were guarded by only four soldiers on foot and two mounted Cossacks.

On the morning of the 4th we took our *samovar* at Zura. I shall mention here a little personal peculiarity, rather of the *toilette* than of the proper costume of the Russian peasants, partly for lack of any novel incident to note, and partly, that its effect was more apparent here, on account of the greater number of the curious among the younger sort of the people that surrounded us as we sat in our *tarantass*, awaiting the completion of some arrangements that were making for our departure. It consists of the manner in which the hair is worn by the men, which to the eye of a stranger greatly disfigures them. It is not cut properly upon the head, but very regularly round the forehead, either even with, or a little below, the eyes, and even with a line between the lower part of the ears behind; while the throat, and the portion of the back of the head which is below the line to which the hair falls, is kept close shaven. Thus a Russian peasant's head, when it is without a hat or cap, which is its ordinary condition at this season of the year, resembles a mop turned upside down; and as a habit prevails among the peasants of continually shaking their heads, to throw the hair which hangs over their forehead from off their eyes, the effect is precisely that of trundling a mop; and one can hardly help thinking this is not without its effect upon the seat of intelligence beneath their trundling poles. Some of them, however, wisely cut the front of their hair in an arch immediately above

the organs of vision, which, although it makes the face very much resemble that of the owl, has the advantage of relieving the party from the pain of continually shaking the head, and the stranger from the disagreeable sight of a human head turned into, and trundled like, a mop.

There is another circumstance which tends to heighten the ludicrous in this peasant custom. The horses of the interior parts of Russia, never being trimmed, and never having any portion of their manes or tails, or of the hair upon any part of their bodies cut, have their heads, foreheads and eyes especially, so completely covered, that they are forced to resort to the same custom as the peasants, of everlastingly shaking the head, except when on the trot, when the wind divides their hair, without which they could make but very little use of their eyes. Thus, several times, as we sat in our *tarantass*, we thought that the human and *chevaline* heads sufficiently assimilated the biped and the quadruped, to produce one of those impressions that may be occasionally useful in reminding us of our affinity with the rest of the animal creation.

On continuing our journey, we found the country abounding more than at any time previously, in those deep ravines and narrow valleys, which have been before mentioned, and which, as far as my experience goes, are found more or less prevailing, not alone upon the steppes of Russia, but throughout all extensive plains of alluvial formation. At twelve o'clock we changed at a village with a church, in the midst of a country about half cultivated and half covered with the natural forest.

Early in the afternoon, we passed the boundary between the Vodiaqui country and the Government of Perm; and never was there a change in a traveller's affairs more rejoiced in, than that which we now found

in the improved condition of the roads. We were so delighted indeed with what we now experienced, that we indulged alternately in extolling the good governor of Perm, and speaking ill of the governors of the provinces behind us. But in truth, the real cause of the better condition of the roads in the department that we were now entering, and of the worse condition of those in the departments which we had already passed through, was beyond the responsibility of any of the representatives of their sovereign. The better roads in the government of Perm, were the results of the riches of the department in mines both of iron, and the precious metals. They were here every where heaped up and gravelled, and were little inferior to our own roads that are not yet macadamized.

We stopped to dine at a village called Klanovskaia, where we had excellent *stchee*, potatoes, and barley soup, and several dishes composed chiefly of eggs and milk.

Upon quitting the village, we found the country still improving in natural beauty, and we passed over several eminences, one of which afforded us a view, only equalled, of all we had seen in Russia, by that mentioned between Nijhni Novgorod and the passage of the Volga. The road continued good; and at sunset we reached the large village of Sosnovskaia, and late in the evening we supped at Doubrovskaia.

We found the inhabitants of these villages without any other artificial light than that which they obtain from burning the chips of some of the more resinous firs which abound in their country. These they place in tubes of iron, furnished with hooks, by which, when the chips are lighted, they are hung to, and kept clear of, the wall.

At six o'clock in the morning of the 5th, we crossed the River Kama at Ochansk, while we were both in the

happy state of unconsciousness in which the better condition of the roads enabled us to indulge. We took our early *samovar* at Poloudennaia, which is situated in a tolerably cultivated country. We observed in this village more than the ordinary appearance of industry among the inhabitants, both within and without their dwellings. The good woman who prepared our meal had eight children, of which one was still in the cradle. We were amused by the manner in which she contrived to meet the several calls that divided her attention. She had suspended the cradle from a pole of supple wood, to form a spring by which it could be kept swinging, and she had attached a string to her arm and to the pole, long enough to allow her to renew the movement of the spring when it ceased, at whatever part of the room she might happen to be at work.

Soon after we resumed our journey, we passed a village upon the River Verkny Moolinsk, belonging, we were informed, to the Princess Booter, one of the richest subjects of the realm. There was an iron manufactory near the river, and several craft were lying afloat in the stream as we passed by; and houses were every where building in the village, which exhibited all the evidences of increase of wealth, and of a growing population. The princess, however, who resided at St. Petersburg, and who no doubt thought the pleasures of the court more suitable to her sex and rank than the turmoil of iron manufactories near the bounds of Europe, was only known here through her agents, for several of whom very nice houses were constructing. On the same day we arrived at Perm.

The city of Perm is the capital of the extensive government of the same name, and is the seat of a bishopric. It was founded by order of Catherine II. so late as in the year 1780, and is situated at the point at which the River Ianitchevska falls into the Kama,

which is the largest of all the rivers that take their rise in the Ural Mountains, and one of the principal tributaries of the Volga. It had lately been almost destroyed by fire, but was now fast recovering from the ravages of the destructive element; and it had already all the buildings and offices of a capital of a government, and many elegant private houses, which are placed at irregular distances apart, on either side of its broad and parallel streets. Perm, like all the Russian towns that have been restored after their destruction by the same element, or have received their principal embellishments since the era of Peter the Great, presents the aspect of youth designed for mighty development at mature age. This planning of towns certainly indicates a foresight and care for the comfort and interests of posterity, such as we rarely find any traces of, in the works of the past generations in any of the older countries of Europe, and very little disposition to imitate any where, in the present age. And from this we may infer, that the government in this instance has triumphed over the tendency generally prevailing among the Russian people, wholly to sacrifice the future to the passing advantages of the hour. The wealthy *boyar* by, it must be confessed, a generous disposition towards the more agreeable errors—"*abundat dulcibus vitiis*"—sports with the produce of industry, as if wealth had no other field for its employment than the gratification of the epicurean desires of its possessors; while the *mujik* too often lives as if there were no morrow. Thus, when a century more of time has approved the judgment of the founders of the towns now new, in regard to the sites that have been chosen, and streets are formed of houses such as those already erected, and when those towns whose position has not warranted the original plans are curtailed of their undue proportions, no country on earth will be able to

boast of so many convenient, elegant, and healthy towns, as the now newly settled, and yet still thinly populated districts of Russia.

The city of Perm contains about 4000 inhabitants, who are for the most part occupied in the smelting of iron, copper, and other mineral productions of the mines within the government, and in commerce with Nijhni Novgorod and other places, depending upon the exchange of productions by the Volga and its tributaries.

We remained but a few hours in this city, on account of the lateness of the season, and the increasing risk of being delayed by the falling of the snow in the mountains, which would have rendered it difficult for us to pass them with the wheeled carriage in which we were travelling. We made, however, a visit to the great depôt of iron here, which exhibited a busy scene, purely commercial.

We had heard on arriving here, that there was an Englishman in the town, and we had made an unsuccessful search for him while we were on our walk. But soon after our return to our hotel, the gentleman, having already heard of our arrival, came to pay us a visit, and proved to be Mr. Boiling, a British subject, but a native of the island of Heligoland, and of Danish origin. Our meeting here with this gentleman was, however, a fortunate accident for us, as he belonged to Ikaterinburg, upon the opposite side of the mountains, and had been waiting for an opportunity to return into Siberia; and as we had plenty of room for him, he agreed to accompany us.

We left Perm about sun-set. During the first part of our journey we passed through several Tatar villages, at two of which we changed horses during the night; and we arrived at an early hour in the morning of the 6th at the small district town of Koungour.

Soon after leaving Koungour, we crossed a small stream. The road by which we ascended the hill upon the opposite side of the ravine through which this stream passed, was formed upon a solid bed of alabaster.

The next considerable village which we passed was called Morgaunova. The country after this exhibited agreeable natural scenery, with hills of variegated forms, and abounding in firs. The soil is here composed of a fine black mould; and though the natural vegetation and the luxuriance of the forests, indicated great fertility, there were but a few scattered inhabitants, and a very little cultivation, where the land seemed most to invite the settlement of a rural population.

About noon, we came upon the eastern side of the summit of a hill that we had ascended, from which we obtained a fine view of the country. Towards evening, we reached Atstritskaia, where we dined.

Early the next morning we arrived at Kirgishanskaia, which was formerly a considerable fortress, but is now a desolate and nearly deserted village. Here we first met with the cranberry of the Ural, which seemed to me to resemble that of Newfoundland, commonly called by the Europeans settled in that island the partridge-berry, rather than the larger cranberry of the continent of America. These acid berries are usually eaten here boiled in milk, and without sugar. We breakfasted upon them with a little bread. But as our tastes required sugar, and there was none to be obtained, we had hardly now a fair opportunity of judging of their quality compared with that of those we had been accustomed to eat elsewhere. But subsequent trials enable me to pronounce them equally well-flavoured with those of America, but less acid.

Early in the day, we passed a broad stream, upon the banks of which stood a large iron manufactory, belonging to the Countess of Strogonoff, who, we were told,

was the owner of no less than 80,000 serfs. Every thing here wore the appearance of an important town in embryo, which, if the demand for iron in the western countries of Europe continues, must rapidly develop itself. There are large establishments here also for the construction of vessels to carry the produce of the mines to Nijhni Novgorod. Some vessels were in frame upon the stocks, and some that were completed, were afloat; and we were informed, that there were many built here of the burden of no less than 200 tons. They are open craft, with enormous beams upon a level with their gunwales, and with sides as solid as those of ships that navigate the ocean. We heard that about 400 of these craft were annually loaded here for Nijhni Novgorod, and that fifty of these carried tallow coming from Siberia, a portion of which, by the Volga, the Lake Ladoga, and the Neva, finds its way even to England. The rest are loaded with iron and copper from the mines of those minerals in this vicinity.

The last of these incipient commercial cities which we passed, was the yet mere village of Vinkintz, which lies upon a stream of the same name. The chief workshop and building of a manufactory, and a large church, formed conspicuous objects, around which new houses were constructing, and the long straight lines of Russian streets beginning to appear.

We had been gradually ascending to the more elevated country of the Ural Mountains from the time we quitted Perm, and every step, as we proceeded, presented new and more picturesque scenery. But these mountains are more remarkable, on account of their geographical position and their mineral riches, than distinguished among those grander objects of nature which, in several parts of the earth, raise their heads above the region of the clouds, and remain clothed in perpetual snow. The highest peak along the whole

range of the Ural, which is Pavdenskoi Kamin, is only 6,400 feet above the level of the sea; and there are many passes where the elevation does not exceed 2,100 feet. Throughout almost the whole of their extent, they present forests, which vary in kind and in growth, in proportion to the latitudes under which they flourish. We found them abounding, as we proceeded, in the varieties of the fir tribes, including the pine of several species, of very stunted growth, but with which were mingled the silver birch, and a few limes, oaks, and elms, from none of which a leaf seemed yet to have fallen. In some parts, the cedar is found, and in others the larch. But the larch, we were confidently assured by the gentleman who was now travelling with us—and it is a remarkable fact—is found only upon the eastern side of the mountains; which, indeed, our experience, as far as it went, confirmed. But in those forests which lie south of the parallel at which we crossed the range, the oak and the lime are more abundant; while towards the north, beyond the sixtieth degree of latitude, even the hardy birch is scarcely found.

Almost all the wild animals of many species common to Europe and the temperate zone, are found in the Ural Mountains; and bears, foxes, wolves, and several kinds of game, such as grouse, the black-cock, and the partridge, are abundant.

The minerals which are found in them, and comprise the chief wealth of the district, are, gold, silver, platina, lead, and iron; but salt, marble, malachite and the load-stone, are also found here; and, as may be seen by the collections in the museums at St. Petersburg, they have contributed jasper, agates, amethysts, and diamonds to the world's riches in precious stones.

Though the geographical position of the Ural chain is too well known as the boundary between Europe and Asia, to need any remarks in this place, we may make

a few observations concerning their extent, and the rivers to which they give rise.

The course of the chief portion of these mountains is nearly due north and south; and their range is from the fifty-fifth to the sixty-fifth degree of north latitude, along the meridian of about the sixtieth degree of east longitude from Greenwich. But below the fifty-fifth degree, they incline more towards the west, and terminate in the latitude of about fifty-one degrees and a half, upon the River Ural, along the course of which is continued the division line of the two quarters of the globe, until that river falls, after a course of about 600 miles, into the Caspian Sea. Towards the north, beyond the sixty-fifth degree, the mountains take a north-east course, and terminate upon the shores of the Arctic Sea, in the seventieth degree of north latitude. The whole of their range comprehends a distance of 1,200 miles. There is, however, throughout the range great inequality in their breadth in different parallels of their course. Sometimes, in forming distinct chains, like many other mountains, they reach to the breadth of seventy miles, while at other points, their breadth does not exceed seven miles. Where they are broadest, they abound in lakes and marshes; and, in several districts, are found sulphureous and other mineral springs.

The principal rivers which take their rise in the Ural Mountains, are, the Kama, on the west side of the chain, and already mentioned as a branch of the Volga, and the Sosva, which falls into the Ob upon the east side, and the Zura, which falls into one of the tributaries of the same great Siberian river.

Our ascent of these mountains, which was always gradual, and often imperceptible, was hardly more apparent as we approached the highest elevation. The same forests, also, continued to abound, varied only by

the trees in their several varieties being more stunted in their growth. There was, in fact, but little variation from the general character of the ground and its productions, as we proceeded, though in some places we observed the granite rocks to protrude. The road was neither tortuous, nor locked in by prominences, nor by hills rising around, as usually happens upon the ascent of mountains; and before we reached the highest point over which the traveller passes by this route, we were able for some time to contemplate an extensive and noble view of the wooded country over which we had passed, which appeared stretching out to the compass of the view, or terminating in irregular and faint lines along the eastern horizon.

About two hours after mid-day, we reached the highest elevation that the traveller attains by this pass in these mountains, which is 3,700 feet above the level of the sea. It is marked by a cross, which our companion informed us had been placed there by the Archduke Michael, the surviving brother of the reigning Emperor, on the occasion of a journey which he performed into Siberia.

But while we yet stand upon these remarkable mountains, which divide the two most populous quarters of the globe, and form the line of demarcation between the two grand countries of the Russian Empire, we are involuntarily led to consider for a moment the moral as well as physical position in which we are placed at this period of our journey, both in regard to the country from which we have ascended, and to that to which we are about to descend.

The traveller of the least sensibility in the world, might here find it impossible to avoid concentrating his impressions, and taking a retrospective glance over his several labours accomplished, with the incidents by which they have been marked, and at the same time

indulging in visions of new scenes and new modes of life, about to come under his observation and engage his interest. The passage of mountains is always among the remarkable events in a traveller's progress, and more especially, whatever may be their character, physically considered, when they divide great empires or portions of empires inhabited by people of dissimilar habits and manners.

My two fellow-travellers and myself here alighted from our *tarantass*, walked, talked, and sat on the turf, and with pleasure contemplated the scenery, which was chiefly to be observed towards the side from which we had ascended; and the merchant and myself summed up our opinions concerning what we had seen and experienced during our sojourn in that portion of the empire which we were now leaving behind us.

We had, previously to the journey we had undertaken together, severally visited the two great capitals, as well as some other towns of the empire, and we had now seen many of the villages. We had mixed more or less with the inhabitants every where, and had had the opportunity of observing something of the character and manners of the people, and of comparing these with such as we had observed among the people of the elder nations of Western Europe. To express our impressions in a few words, it must suffice to say, that we both quitted Russia Proper with high opinions of two out of four classes of the people with whom we had come the most frequently in contact, or with whom we had had the best opportunity of associating, and with the reverse impression of the remaining classes. The Russian educated gentleman, and the *mujik* or peasant, had by their suavity and politeness, however differently these were displayed, wherever we met them, and in all transactions we had had with them, equally gained our regard and esteem. But of the inferior classes of the

commercial part of the population, and the under classes of the *chinovnik* or officials generally, we unwillingly entertained the most unfavourable impressions. Nevertheless, the good elements are so predominant in the proper Russian character, as it must be perceived from the conduct of the peasant, whose most conspicuous qualities are, piety, loyalty, fidelity, hospitality, quickness, and everlasting good humour, and are so deeply seated, that we may hope, as an accomplished education has finished the gentleman, some improvement in the adaptation of the education of the other classes, may effect great and early changes in their manners also, and in their moral character. It is, however, at present said, and, I am persuaded, with good reason, that such knowledge as these classes have been able to acquire, has hitherto tended rather to corrupt than improve both their manners and moral conduct, and become a positive evil instead of a blessing to themselves and all their fellow subjects.

After thus dismissing the past, we now fixed our thoughts more fully upon the countries before us. We were about to enter a new region, in another quarter of the globe, inhabited in some parts, by nations and tribes not yet subdued to admit more exact laws and government than are necessary to raise them from the sad state of man in his original barbarism to the first degrees of civilisation, and, in other parts by tribes not even physically overcome, or in a condition to take the first step in the common progress of man from the condition of the savage to that of refined life. We were about to enter that country, rather known to the world in its character of a penal colony, than as the nurse of new races of men doomed to multiply indefinitely, and reserved to unite in the general efforts of man to raise and ameliorate his condition. Such, indeed, may be the portion of the Siberians long before the more ancient and

stubborn race that borders upon their territory in the south, have acquired sufficient knowledge to enable them to stay that destruction, which, like a law of nature, seems to await nations that come too rapidly in contact with others that are greatly in advance of them in the essentials of general civilisation. It was at least our hope, that we should not quit Siberia with less agreeable feelings than those in which we summed up the impressions with which we quitted Russia Proper.

CHAP. XIII.

DESCENT FROM THE MOUNTAINS INTO SIBERIA.

View of the Siberian Plains.— An Ostrog.— A Tatar Tomb.— Appearance of a distant Village.—View of Tributary Stream of the River Ob.—View of Ikaterinburg.—Arrival at Ikaterinburg.— Caravansary.— Reminiscence here of an English Traveller.—Iron Manufactory.—Walk through the Town.—Convent Burial Ground.—Primitive Condition of the Arts of Architecture and Sculpture.— Native Genius of the Russians.

We were not far beyond the highest point of elevation by this pass of the Ural Mountains, in our descent toward the plains of Siberia, before we perceived a change in the character of the vegetation. The same trees and shrubs that we had observed in our ascent, were here more thinly sown, and more stunted in growth, and abounded in evidence of the effects of their greater exposure to the winter storms and east winds, than those which flourished upon the opposite side of the mountains. The larch too, which, as already mentioned, is not found upon the European side, nor found at all in that part of the country which lies east of the range, we observed already in sufficient quantity to attract our particular notice.

We had not proceeded far, when a prospect opened before us, such as our more gradual ascent had not prepared us to expect. The vast steppe or plain, which commences at the very base of the mountains, was seen stretching out to the bounds of the view, with scarce a break in the straight line which seemed drawn along the margin at which the horizon met the sky; while the

nearer prospect was varied, on our left hand, by a view of the village of the gold washings of Neviansk, though indistinctly seen, and a silvery stream, wending its course through the dark firs that environ it, and on the right, by a greater variety of colours in the vegetation.

As we advanced, the village that we had seen from the higher point of the road, became hid from our sight, while the stream, which is that of the Neiva, one of the second or third-class tributaries of the great River Ob, became more visible; so that we were able now to trace its course through a great extent of country, in its passage towards the Irtysch and the Ob, through which its waters reach the Arctic Sea by the Gulf of Obischer.

We had not made above a third of the descent, before we obtained a view of the white edifices of the first Siberian town, Ikaterinburg, situated in a dusky and gloomy portion of the plain. The town, however, and the distant view soon disappeared again: and nothing was now to be seen, to break the monotonous character of the road, until we passed two Tatar tombs upon some elevated ground upon our right hand; but concerning which, neither our new fellow-traveller nor our *yemstchik* could give us any account, nor had heard any legend. We passed now, also, an *ostrog*, or place of rest for the exiles, which is the first at which they stop after passing the summit of the mountains, which so many are doomed never to recross.

We reached Ikaterinburg about sunset; and after driving up a newly formed wide street, carpeted with moss and grass, and the houses in which stood from about 50 to 200 yards apart, we turned into a caravansary resembling that in which we spent so many sad days at Kazan.

Our new fellow-traveller now left us for the present, and as it was too late to make a survey of the town, we ordered some supper to be prepared; and we

were very soon seated with good appetites over our first meal in the land of exiles, which consisted of a brace of partridges and an excellent dish of the rarely wanting *stchee*.

Our landlord, who was by birth an Italian, came and seated himself by us, while we were over our supper, that he might hear what news we had brought from the opposite side of the mountains. We had, however, nothing to tell him, save the character and extent of the commercial transactions at Nijhni Novgorod, compared with those of other years, all which my companion was fully capable of communicating to him. After this, he asked us some questions concerning our object in coming into Siberia; and, when these had been replied to, he made an especial inquiry of myself, who, he had observed by my passport, was an Englishman. He wished, he now said, particularly to know whether it was my intention to wait upon the general, who was residing here and acting as civil governor of the district. In answer to this, I informed him that it was certainly my intention so to do the very next morning, if not prevented by similar causes to those which had kept us both close prisoners in the caravansary during our stay at Kazan. Upon this he explained the cause of his curiosity, by giving us the following little account of the visit of an Englishman to Ikaterinburg, and which I cannot forbear reporting.

'Mine host of the caravansary related, that about ten years ago, an Englishman, a stranger to every one in the place, drove into his court, and sent up a servant that he had with him, to request the attendance of the landlord; and, upon our host's descending to the court, the stranger asked him whether his best apartments were unoccupied, and, on hearing that they were so, requested, without asking any other question, that

they might be immediately washed, and have fires lighted in them; and he begged that he might be informed when they were perfectly dry, for that he intended to remain in his carriage until he was well assured that they were clean, and dry and warm, and fit for his reception.

The landlord, though not much flattered by the opinion which the Englishman seemed to entertain of the cleanliness of his house, yet willing to believe that the stranger was an invalid, invited him to occupy his own apartment until the best rooms in the hotel were prepared to receive him. This, however, the stranger refused to do, persisting in his resolution not to leave his carriage until the apartments which he had requested might be prepared for him, were ready. Upon this, the landlord set half his household to work, to accomplish his promise as speedily as possible. But, although the rooms were reported within an hour to be washed and completely dried, the stranger remained above two hours in his carriage before he ascended to them.

After taking possession of his rooms, he remained for several weeks at the hotel, without communicating with any one, except through his servant, who was a Russian whom he had brought with him, and without experiencing any molestation from any one, and occupied chiefly in reading; and during this time he was rarely seen abroad. At length, however, whether from any suspicion of his objects in Siberia, excited by his seclusion, or his negligence in not conforming to the usage of the country in paying his respects to the governor, or from personal offence taken on this account, the general who was at that time governor of the district, sent him word that he had been expecting a visit from him. The Englishman, upon receiving this message, which was brought by a private servant of the

governor, sent word, in reply, that he had no intention to make any such visit. The governor, however, for the present, took no notice of this answer to his message. But after another week had passed, he sent word through the police, to command the Englishman's attendance. To this, the Englishman replied, that the governor had his passport, and, that if he wanted anything more of him, he must himself come to him. This was, however, rather too much for the patience of the general, who now sent the chief of the police to conduct the Englishman to his presence.

The Englishman being made acquainted with the order by the chief of the police himself, who now came to put it into execution, and being without any apparent means of averting the summons which he had determined not to obey, after considering a little, seemed to assent, and ordered his own vehicle out, and then descended in company with the officer, apparently as well disposed now to obey the laws or customs of the country, as if he had been a Russian subject. On the arrival of the party in the court, a little question of etiquette arose concerning the right of entering the vehicle the last, in which the Englishman by his politeness lulled any suspicion of his intentions, and gained his object in obtaining his claim, as the owner of the vehicle, to be the last to take his place in it. But the Russian was no sooner seated, than his supposed prisoner gave the *isvoshtschik*, who he had taken care had previously mounted the box, a quick order to drive on, which being promptly obeyed, after the fashion of all *employés* in Russia, with the reply, *sloutches* (directly), the Russian was at least driven far enough and detained long enough, to afford the Englishman time to return to his apartments before he could be overtaken, and where he now bolted and barred himself in, at the same time giving orders to his servant, that

no one should be admitted into the outer rooms without his express permission. The chief of the police, however, returned at a convenient time, with some of his fellows, and demanded that he might be immediately admitted; upon which, the servant, not daring to disobey the order, unbarred the doors, and hastened to give notice to his master of what his necessitous position had obliged him to do. Upon this, the Englishman flew in a violent passion, and thrashed his servant so soundly before the entrance of the police into the inner apartment, that the man was afterwards found to have received serious injury. Our countryman was now, however, a prisoner; nevertheless, he was detained merely on account of the manner in which he had treated his servant; and finally, the affair terminated in a summary process, and the judgment of the *Ispravnik*, or chief magistrate of the district, on account of the injury done to the servant, in which the eccentric stranger was mulcted in the sum of 12,000 rubles, and received his passport to return into Russia.

On the morning after our arrival at Ikaterinburg, our companion from Perm called to offer me his aid as interpreter and guide, while the merchant was occupied with his affairs of commerce; and, as I thought it might slightly counterbalance the unfavourable opinion that must be still held here of the politeness and good sense of my countrymen, after the eccentric adventure above related, to be very diligent in waiting upon the general (which, indeed, is a step as politic as it is proper in a traveller in Russia), we set off immediately for the government house. At the gate of the building, however, we learned from the sentinels or soldiers of the guard of honour, that his Excellency was at one of the mines in the vicinity, and was not expected to return for several days.

This costless compliment thus paid, we next called

upon a resident English engineer, Mr. Tate, possessing an extensive iron manufactory at this place. My countryman was at home, and we were conducted by him through the different departments of his establishment, and afterwards introduced to his family. We found Mrs. Tate a remarkably handsome German lady, of a polite education and of very attractive manners and conversation, which those who have been often for long periods without the society of any of the refined portion of the fair sex, and have the prospect before them of a renewal of the deprivation, know well how to appreciate. She had been taken from her own country to Hull, in England, when very young, where she became united with her present husband, who had raised himself by his industry and perseverance, from the humbler ranks of the artizans of his country to his present position.

There was also another English engineer at Ikaterinburg, whom we next called upon—Mr. Jackson, who had been sent into Siberia by the Russian government to aid and extend the operations of the iron works in this vicinity, and had but just arrived. We found this gentleman at present busy with his wife, a countrywoman of his own, in making all the necessary arrangements to guard against the cold and storms of their approaching first winter in the country.

During the remainder of the day, we were occupied with an examination of the town. Ikaterinburg was founded by the Empress Katherine, and, like all the Russian towns that have been founded, or have received their chief embellishments since the era of Peter the Great, presents the aspect of vigorous minority designed for mighty development at its mature age. Scarcely a house is now standing within fifty yards of another, and sometimes several hundred yards intervene between buildings of the same class. The few public buildings already erected, although constructed with

little assistance from the rules of art, are yet fine to the eye that will not be critical. Some of the houses, as in the newer quarter of Kazan, are already of brick. In the part of the town reserved to be some day the most attractive and fashionable, there is a natural lake of about two versts in circumference, and by the side of which houses of a sufficient degree of elegance for the nonage of the town have been erected. Among these stands that of Mr. Tate, at whose door there was already lying a miniature pleasure steamer, doubtless the first vessel of the yacht class that has yet floated upon the inland waters beyond the Ural Mountains; and parties of pleasure, accompanied by music, we were told, formed chiefly of the official gentlemen of the place, frequently during the summer months float upon the lake on board this little specimen of that wonder of the age, which was but yesterday as great a marvel to ourselves as it is to-day to the Siberians. Thus, the sounds of music and mirth, in the good fellowship of science and the arts, have already been wafted over the silent plains around the first Siberian town, in notes that seem to announce that a new era in the history of the country is at hand.

There is a convent of nuns at Ikaterinburg, to the church of which we next directed our steps. We found the doors, however, closed; we therefore contented ourselves with entering the burial-ground. We found many memorials, of those chiefly who had departed life in the service of the government here, since the time of the foundation of the town. There were some few sculptured monuments, partly of marble. These had been brought from one of the towns in Russia; but they did not give us a much higher idea of the advance of the arts at the town from which they came, than that which we might suppose, from the pedestals upon which they stood, to be their condition, at Ikaterinburg. Not, indeed, among all the monuments, whether time-honoured or

fresh from the hand of the artist, did we see a straight perpendicular or horizontal line. And among many of those constructed of stone that had fallen, were to be seen others crumbling away, as it seemed, for want of the application of the simplest rules of art in their construction. Even the church itself, with its gay white and green colours, so agreeable to contemplate at a distance, had not a straight line either in the body of the building or in its tower. And we afterwards observed that, of five churches of which the town has to boast, there was not an instance of a tower or spire, old or new, in which the deviation from the perpendicular was not to be distinctly seen. It should, however, be here observed, that churches are found in even some of the better towns of Russia more or less wanting also in the application of the first elements of art. Nevertheless, this is even one of many instances which exhibit both the native genius and the faculty of imitation, which form remarkable features in the proper Russian character. A Russian, even often a mere peasant, who knows not the first elements of geometry, who has no knowledge of the properties of the angle save that which is innate in every quick intelligence, builds a stately, spacious building, which, at a careless glance, seems a beautiful edifice, but which, examined more closely, exhibits defects which it seems impossible could arise from errors that might be committed by one sufficiently skilled to have raised the whole. Nor, indeed, would this remark be wholly inapplicable even to the architectural works generally of the two great capitals, but more especially to those of the city, which has the advantage of the court patronage, where, with the exception of the edifices of the first order, which are for the most part the work of foreigners, there is scarcely one with a wall or tower standing perfectly upright.

The same deficiency in the rules of art is also ap-

parent in the construction of the bridges, in which it is common to see an arch, if not forming a perfect curved line, at least solid and secure, propped up by an iron frame of less than a thousandth part of its own strength, which sweeps beneath the arch, and is attached at each end to the buttresses upon which the ends of the arch rest. Even, sometimes, at a foot or two beneath the arch is seen a circle of bricks which have detached themselves from the more solid work, and rest upon the feeble iron frame which they have displaced by their mere weight.

Remarks, indeed, of a similar kind might be made concerning all the works of art and industry in Russia, except the few manufactured articles which have obtained credit abroad, and are exported in considerable quantities. Nevertheless, if the Russians have by nature, such ingenuity and invention as we have ascribed to them, what a field is opening for their exercise through the districts but now commencing the development of those resources which will, ere long, change them into populous and flourishing lands of industry and wealth!

We entered one of the private gardens, of which there are many in the town. The era in the history of other towns, at which exotic fruit trees are introduced, or at which goodly dames and young ladies water their flowers, has not yet arrived in that of Ikaterinburg. We found, however, carrots, cabbages, and potatoes, though none were very good, growing in a rich black mould, which it was difficult to believe was the native undressed soil, until we saw it in other places, where the ground was laid open for building, even from the surface to the depth of six or eight feet, and of such naturally fertilizing quality as to supersede the necessity for any sort of manure.

CHAP. XIV.

VISIT TO THE GOLD MINES OF NEVIANSK.

Aspect of the Country.— Deserted Village.— Gloomy Lake.— Village of the Miners.—Noble Damsels.—The Auriferous Beds. —Manner of Searching for Gold.—Operations for the Extraction of the Gold.—Working by Hand.— By Machines.—Extraction of the Quartz.— Riches of the Ural Mountains.—Extraction of Platina.— Despatch and Transport of the Gold.— Government Arrangements.— Particular Examination of the Works.

Upon the second day after our arrival at Ikaterinburg, I was accompanied by the same gentleman as on the previous day's tour, on a visit to the gold washings of Neviansk, at the distance of twenty-two versts from the town.

We engaged a droshky and a couple of spirited horses, and set off at an early hour. The temperature of the air already here indicated the approach of winter, and the thermometer was now as low as four degrees of heat; yet the atmosphere continued still serene, and the sky clear, both by night and day. The country over which we now passed, though possessing evidently the same good soil as that which we had already observed in the town, was covered with the dark running ground-spruce, amid which appeared a few birch and fir trees, sown far apart, and of stunted growth; and the road, which seemed to have been formed merely by the passage of wheeled carriages and horses, was bad.

After passing a small lake sixteen or seventeen versts from Ikaterinburg, on our right hand, we arrived at the

village from which the mines take their name. Here, on the one hand, we observed two churches standing amidst straggling houses and huts, which, to all appearance, could not together contain above 200 inhabitants, and, on the other side, quite apart from the village, several neat official dwellings, including that occupied by the special superintendent of the works, upon whom we now called to request permission to examine all that was interesting for a stranger to see in the vicinity.

We found the superintendent, a polite German, who, notwithstanding our somewhat irregular appearance, without a letter from the governor, which we ought to have previously obtained, gave us an order to pass through all the works and offices of the mines and the washings; and we set off for the centre of the scenes of interest, from which we were still several versts distant.

After driving two or three versts further, across a low and marshy country, we came to the remains of a straggling settlement of mere huts, now uninhabited and falling to ruin, in consequence of those who had dwelt in them, who were chiefly gold washers, miners, and mechanics, having removed and built another village nearer the site of the operations.

Soon after passing these wrecks of deserted huts, we came upon the shores of a lake, about six or seven versts in length and three in breadth, amidst a country of the same low character as that which we had already passed, and presenting everything that can be imagined the most opposite to the picturesque or beautiful in natural scenery, and quite in harmony with the solitude of the village in which we had not seen a living creature. The shores of this lake were surrounded by dark ground-spruce and stunted fir trees, and no birds and no bark of any kind appeared floating upon its bosom; nor were the waters, when we stopped by its

shores to look around us, now rippled by a breath of air, which might have afforded some relief to the gloomy character of the scene.

After we had driven about a verst, however, along the solitary shores, a canoe appeared near the middle of the lake, which looked as if it were bearing away the last man of a population departed in search of some more genial clime. Soon after this, we came in sight of, and shortly arrived at, the village now inhabited by the miners, which consisted merely of scattered huts, all of which were placed near the shores of the lake; and, as we thought it better to make some inquiries before proceeding further, we drove among the miners' dwellings, in the hope of finding some one or other to whom we might address ourselves. We drove about, however, for some time without seeing a living soul, and without perceiving a sign that any one of the huts had any tenants within it. At length we observed a dwelling that, from its superiority to the rest, although not painted, we conceived must be that of the immediate superintendent of the gold works; and we drove up in front of it, and alighted and knocked at the door. We knocked again and again, however, without receiving any reply. Yet, as we thought we heard voices within, we were determined to do our utmost to put ourselves in communication with the tenants of the house, if it should, indeed, have any; and we now ventured, as curious persons are wont to do, to peep in at the window. Upon this, three girls, who seemed half terrified and half amused, jumped up from the ground upon which they had been sitting beneath the window, and scampered away, half laughing and half screaming, into an inner room. We remained, however, inflexible in our purpose; and we called to them, and commenced knocking again, until one of them, whose curiosity seemed to overcome her terror, came

to the window to peep at us in her turn; upon which my companion recognised her as one of three *protégées* of the superintendent, all of whom he remembered seeing with their foster father at Ikaterinburg. As the young lady's memory, however, seemed not to be as good as my companion's, a parley took place, which was conducted with almost as much ceremony as if it had been between the besiegers of a fortress and the besieged, but which ended in my companion making himself known, and reassuring the maidens, who now opened the door, and invited us to enter, with a confidence which seemed to indicate that they felt they had been guilty of want of hospitality.

The house consisted of two rooms, the character of which was quite in keeping with the wretched appearance of the village. The only furniture we saw, consisted of two or three benches, and about the same number of bedsteads, upon which rested beds of a very coarse description. The damsels, however, brought us a bench, that we might sit down. And, attracted by the novelty of our position, and pleased with the manners of the girls, and their confidence in us, when there was probably not a male inhabitant of the village within a verst, we seated ourselves without hesitation; and they now placed themselves upon another bench near and opposite to us, and my companion, who was perfectly acquainted with their language, began to converse with them.

It was impossible not to feel great interest in these children of the wild waste amidst which this village is seated. They appeared to be between the ages of fourteen and seventeen; and their manners and their dress were quite in harmony with the character of the place, and with the position of the girls. Their entire clothing consisted of a simple loose robe or sleeved chemise of home-spun cloth, beneath which peeped

their bare feet and ankles; and there appeared a delicacy in their manner of expressing themselves, that was sufficient evidence that they had at least seen some nurture. When I remarked to my companion that this was apparent, a whole history of the girls, which he had heard before, and forgotten until this moment, flashed across his memory, and a part of which that he now related to me I must here report.

They were the daughters of parents belonging to one of the numerous classes of the nobility of the empire, and therefore, they themselves, noble. They had, however, been suddenly left orphans a few years ago, and had since been taken care of by their present protector, who, besides being superintendent of the immediate works of the mines, was a major in the army. Yet, on account of his income not being adequate to place them in a station of life commensurate with their proper rank, he had been obliged to keep them in the state of seclusion in which they here dwelt. Whatever were the instruction they received or the examples that were before them when children, as they now sat before us, busily occupied in knitting while they conversed, they seemed as full of grace and ease as they were deficient in the encumbrances attached to the European modern dress of the fair sex. Their appearance and manners, indeed, were more calculated to remind us of the nymphs of the grotto of Calypso, than of noble ladies of our age in the west of Europe, who are too often deformed, rather than adorned, by submission to the dictates of absurd fashions, originating in their *modiste's* fancies or the love of change. One of them, too, in our judgment, possessed much more of the beauty of feature and form, than falls to the share of the average of womankind.

When we took leave of them, they asked whether they should ever see us again; and, when my companion informed them, that this was very improbable,

the eldest of the three, who had spoken the most, said, as her words were interpreted to me, "Then we thank you for coming this once." But this simple and short phrase was uttered in a tone of voice and manner that impressed us with a lively sense of the true bitterness of solitude at an age at which we are most disposed to every kind of social enjoyment.

On our arrival at the seat of the operations, we found a spacious building set beneath a dam, which, by retaining the waters of the lake below which the works were seated, formed the power by which the chief operation in the extraction of the gold is performed. Upon our application for admittance, we found that the superintendent was absent for the day. The guard at the door, however, to whom we addressed ourselves, went in search of the official in charge, who soon appeared. And upon our presentation of the order, which we had obtained at Neviansk, we were immediately admitted.

The scene was very novel to us as we entered. A series of inclined planes or tables, distinct from one another, occupied either side of the building; and upon these, the washers of the ore were engaged with brushes and brooms, standing or kneeling, as the water streamed from a trough bored with holes, from above the elevated side of the tables, over the surface upon which the ore rests, to fall into a common drain, by which it finds its way to the valley; and mills at the opposite extremity of the building were, on one side, crushing the quartz rock with hammers, to prepare it for the washing, and, on the other, turning cylinders, by which one of the operations of the extraction of the metal is acomplished.

We found the official, who was acting in the place of the superintendent, polite and communicative; and I shall set down such information as we obtained from

him concerning the operations by which the ore is obtained, and the precious metal extracted from the substances with which it is found combined, together with some more general information upon the same subject, for which I was indebted to a scientific Polish gentleman in the service of the government, whom I met in another part of Siberia, and whose civilities I shall have the opportunity of more particularly acknowledging in a future page.

The auriferous sands are always found in the valleys, or imbedded in the earth where valleys have formerly existed; and, in the latter case, it is rarely that they are found upon the declivity of hills.

The beds of auriferous sands are composed principally of the decomposition of *schiste talquor feriſére* and of *schiste chloriteux*, containing oxidulated crystals of iron, *agiles feldspatique*, quartz rock, and serpentine. This last substance is almost always found in an inverse proportion with the *schiste chloriteux*.

The beds which contain the deposits, follow at all times the inclination of the valleys, and are found resting upon the remains of rocks in a state of decomposition, or upon such as have been broken and severed by the action of natural phenomena.

The length of the beds is ordinarily about ten *sarjanes* (or about seventy English feet), and is seldom found to exceed thirty *sarjanes*. It bears, however, in general, a proportionate relation to that of the valleys, as these appear to have existed before the deposits of the auriferous substance were formed. In breadth they vary from a quarter of an *arshene*, which is about equal to an English ell, to three *arshenes*; and their mean depth is about one *arshene*.

The riches of these deposits are sometimes four *zolotniks*, or four-fifteenths of an ounce, to a hundred pouds of sand (a poud being 36lbs. English,) but often

it does not exceed a half, and sometimes not more than a quarter of this quantity. Sands of the same bed, indeed, at one time yield from 40 to 80 *dols* (a dol being the ninety-sixth part of a *zolotnik*) for a hundred pouds, and at another, not above thirty.

The riches of any one of these auriferous beds is always greater where the valley in which the deposit is found, makes, or has at any time made, an elbow or sharp turn in the line of its course, or where the alluvious beds are deepest in the earth. Nevertheless, in both these cases, the particles of the gold obtained are smaller than when the beds lie in straight valleys, or near the surface of the earth. And it is remarked in general, that the higher the beds are upon the hills or up the valleys where they are found, the larger are the pieces of gold, but the greater their rarity.

The auriferous deposits are always covered with beds of sterile earth, which vary from half an *arshene* to four *arshenes*, and even more, in thickness, the mean, however, being about two *arshenes*. These are composed, for the most part, of land formed by vegetable deposits, but sometimes of sand of the nature of the rock in the vicinity.

It is worthy of remark, that all the alluvions of this region are found upon the eastern side of the mountains, and, in general, upon both sides of hills of secondary importance, which form independent chains, running parallel with the grander range.

The manner of searching for the gold deposits in Siberia is generally as follows:—

When a district in which any indications of gold have been discovered, or where the position of the country seems to render this probable, has been determined upon for the search, whether it belong to the government or to some private individual or company, an expedition is set on foot, consisting of one draughts-

man, two foremen, one guide, two guardians, and sixteen labourers.

The search is now made for the beds of auriferous sands in the vicinity of the more mountainous portions of the district, commencing always in the valleys. Wells are first sunk; and in case of coming upon rocks, the attention of the party is turned immediately in another direction; but if otherwise, the deposits found are examined with care, to discover whence proceed the springs, and in what direction the streams have run, by which the valley may be supposed to have been formed. Some idea of the contents of the strata formed being by this means obtained, whenever fresh expectation is excited, square and broader wells are sunk, until the auriferous beds are discovered, or till the solid rocks upon which the several strata rest, are attained, and the futility of further search is apparent.

In all cases, as soon as any clear indication is discovered of the presence of any minerals or metals that may appear to be worthy of attention, a number of wells are dug around the vicinity. If, in the course of digging the wells, expectation begins to be raised by the character of the materials after they are submitted to examination, the search must be persevered in, and this must be noted in the draught. But, as soon as there seems a probability that the deposit may be sufficiently rich to be worked with profit, notice is given to the heads of the general mining administration, or to the managers of the private company, or to any individual who may possess an entire interest in the expedition. And now, when after examination of the accounts by the parties who have the highest interest in the results, with the specimens which have been sent to them, it is thought advisable to proceed farther, a reinforcement of labourers is sent, and many more wells are sunk. But it is particularly required, that the draughtsman

of the expedition should make full and correct plans of the sites of the operations, and the position of the wells that have been sunken.

In cases where any kind of rock is found above the ground in the vicinity of the wells sunken, particular notice is taken in the journal of the character of the rock, and of that of the soil or rocks which the well has exposed. Specimens of both these are sent to the administration, or to parties chiefly interested, as above-mentioned, with plans indicating very nicely the position of the upper rock and the wells. And besides these, other specimens are collected and forwarded of every remarkable mineral, found either in the mines or upon the surface of the ground.

After the earth that has been raised has been examined, the well is filled up, and a heap is made by the side of it, composed of a portion of the materials which have been raised; and a little memorial is now placed over the well, with the number marked upon it, which is designated in the plan. During these researches, or after their completion, a full geological plan is made of the entire territory explored according to a model furnished by the administration.

The plan of the journal in which the managers of the expedition register the results of their operations, is as follows:—

Number of the well.	State of the ground.	State of the woods.	Thickness and nature of the vegetable soils.	Thickness and nature of the sterile sands.	Thickness and nature of the auriferous sands.	Nature of the rocks beneath.	Thickness and nature of the bed of auriferous sand.	Thickness and nature of the clays.	Observations.

The operations for the extraction of the auriferous sands from the earth are as follows:—

When one of these beds of sand has been found sufficiently rich to promise remuneration, the first proceeding is to erect a building, such as that in which we

are now standing, as near as possible to the deposit that any site can be found, where there is a sufficient quantity of water for the operations; after which, the immediate preparations for the proper extraction of the sand commences.

In the first place, a rigid examination is made of the comparative value of equal quantities of sand from each of the wells, in order to ascertain at what portion of the bed the riches most abound. If water, as is very common, is now found in sufficient quantity to obstruct the operations, it is exhausted by means of small pumps. But often, the water is sufficiently abundant to need other means of preventing its impeding the course of operations; and it then becomes even necessary to turn the course of the brook from which it proceeds, by digging a ditch, by which it is diverted in a direction which shall interfere as little as possible with the auriferous sands which are about to be worked. When this is accomplished, the same ditch thus formed, serves also for a road for carts and horses to approach the bed of sand which is thrown open.

If the auriferous bed does not repose immediately upon solid rock, it is necessary to form a temporary road of wood.

If the sterile bed which covers the auriferous deposit is not more than three or four *arshenes* in thickness, and the sand is rich, the whole is thrown open, and the descent to the bed is formed by steps or inclined ways. If, on the contrary, the sands are poor, and the auriferous bed is not above two *arshenes* in thickness, it is usually worked under ground by means of galleries or tunnels of one *sarjane* in height. But these require great care in the construction, in accommodating them to the nature of the soil.

The auriferous sand is now taken up, and carried, usually by means of wheel-barrows, to the building in

which the immediate operations for the extraction of the gold take place. Sometimes the extraction of the precious metal is by means of a machine, and sometimes by washing the ore upon inclined planes or tables, and sometimes by the use of sieves, according to the abundance of water to be obtained, and the quality of the sands.

When a clayey soil is free from gravel, three men, with the aid of four horses and machines, will wash 700 or 800 pouds in a day. But where the soil is gravelly, one man, with the use only of the inclined plane or table, can wash eighty pouds in the same space of time.

The sand which contains but little clay, is usually washed with the sieve, by which process, three men will wash from 400 to 600 pouds a-day; but this requires a great quantity of water. By this method, however, many enormous beds or deposits of sand are now washed, which are found remaining of those that have already undergone the process at some former period, and of which the same number of men are able to wash from 700 to 900 pouds in the same time.

The sieve is formed of iron, and is about two *arshenes* in length and one in breadth, and its sides are about three *vershoks* in height—a *vershok* being equal to nearly an inch and three-quarters. It is so disposed, that, after it is filled with sand, a current of water is made to run into it, while two workmen are kept continually stirring the sand. The sand being thus agitated is drawn by the water through the bottom of the sieve, and falls upon a large inclined plane or table. Here a washer is occupied in pressing upwards the materials which fall from the sieve, upon which the gold and the *schlik*, by reason of their superior weight, remain towards the top of the plane, while the earth and sterile sands are carried away by the running water.

When about a hundred pouds of sand are thus

washed, the gold and the *schlik* remain separated from all the other substances; but they are still confounded with one another, until taken to another table, where the operation is completed.

The *schlik*, which is yet alone apparent—the proportion of gold being too small to discover itself amidst the dark substance with which it is mixed—is now brought to the second of these inclined tables. Here it is placed at the highest part of the table, down which a current of water is again made to run, while a washer, now with a little rake, is occupied in pushing it up towards the head of the table, as the water carries away what gravel remains, and the lighter portions of the *schlik*. The mass being now reduced to a small quantity, a brush similar to that with which we brush our clothes, is used by the washer, who, in kneeling, continues the same process with greater care, while the substance remains exposed to only a very gentle current of the water.

After persevering with this operation for some time, the gold, as the *schlik* diminishes in quantity, begins to appear; but the process is still continued, until the gold itself becomes chiefly the substance upon which the operation is performing, yet mingled with a small quantity of the *schlik*. This process here however ends, and the mass is now gathered and dried; after which a part of the tenacious alloy which still clings to the precious metal is got rid of by means of blowing upon it, and the rest by means of the loadstones. After this, the gold is pure, and ready to be submitted to the operation of fusion.

The process of washing the gold by machines is as follows: —

The sands are thrown into horizontal demi-cylinders, which are furnished with a kind of small mills of iron, with four branches placed upon an axle which passes through the cylinder. A current of water is now

directed upon the cylinder, by the movement of which the gravel and stones are thrown off. Upon leaving the demi-cylinder, all the materials fall upon a sieve, the holes in which are half an inch in breadth. The large stones are here thrown off by a horizontal cross bar which is turned by means of a vertical axle, which receives its movement from a horizontal wheel. All that passes through the sieve, falls upon an inclined plane, and thence into a trough at the bottom, of five *arshenes* in length, and of the form of a demi-cone. The interior of this receptacle is divided into several compartments, the partitions between which are a *vershok* in height.

In this manner the sand is continually agitated, until the lighter portions are carried along by the water, while the *schlik* and the gold remain, first, in the greatest quantity in the four or five first compartments, and afterwards in a less quantity in the other compartments.

The machine by which this operation is performed, is put in motion by means of a wheel with cogs, and of the radius of three-quarters of an *arshène.* The wheel is fixed upon the axle of the cylinder, and upon a wheel of the same kind, of which the diameter is three *arshenes*, and which is itself fixed on a wheel moved by horses.

There is, however, another machine, established upon the same principles, and subject only to slight modifications.

In place of a sieve in this, there is a cylinder with holes throughout its length; and in place of the washer, are substituted three little trenches having small indentations, in which a quantity of mercury is placed. The sand is put into the cylinder, which is agitated until the coarser portions of it are thrown off at an aperture at one end, while the finer pass through the holes, and fall into the trough, and thence into the receiver where the

quicksilver is placed. The gold in falling with the sand upon the surface of the mercury, attaches itself to this metal, and remains at the bottom, while the sand, which floats above, is carried away, and falls into a basin placed beneath the trench for the purpose of collecting the mercury, which is carried off from time to time by the water.

When the process of washing is completed by one of the two methods last described, the *schliks* or residue of black sands, rich in small particles of gold, are submitted to the further extracting process after the ordinary manner, in a vessel turning horizontally upon its axle.

Besides theso sands, there are also auriferous beds in the same districts composed of the quartz rock, supposed by geologists, from its characteristics, to belong to the second series of the existent strata.

The veins of quartz are accompanied by beds of green felspar; but sometimes these disappear, as the operation of extraction proceeds, and sometimes the proportion they bear to the quartz greatly augments.

The extraction of the quartz rock from the ground, is commenced by forming tunnels, such as have been before mentioned, which are begun at the lower extremity of the bed discovered, and carried towards the higher. A cross way is then cut in the mine, in order to separate as much as possible the sterile parts from the richer. Then the rock is brought up by horse machines. After which it is crushed in mills, and then finally submitted to nearly the same process as the sand.

The eastern declivities of the Ural Mountains are rich also in the precious metal platina, which contributes an important item in the sum of the mineral riches of Siberia. This metal is found imbedded in a nearly similar manner to that in which the gold is discovered. The only difference remarked is, that the alluvions that contain platina, are principally formed

of serpentine, more or less decomposed, and of a small proportion of *amphibalite*, and of yet less of quartz. The *schlik* is formed, for the greater part, of iron *chromémagnatié*.

The extraction of the platina from the sterile substances with which it is encumbered, is performed by the same means as that which is employed in the extraction of the gold. The mines of this metal yield about an average of 120 pouds a-year; but there is less certainty in the quantity of their produce than in that of the gold mines.

There is a greatly discouraging feature in the character of the mining hitherto carried on in all parts of Siberia, which is the sensible diminution of the quantity of the precious metals, in a given proportion, in the beds of sand and quartz discovered, and the improbability, as it is thought, of discovering many more. The augmentation of the quantity of gold and platina, which the entire mines have of late years produced, is owing to the increase of the number of the mines in operation.

The gold obtained every day, is dried, cleaned, and, by means of loadstone, entirely disencumbered of the oxide of iron, which it is found to contain; after which, it is weighed, and entered upon the register kept by the superintendent, by whom it is deposited in a chest prepared for the purpose. The gold from all the washings is brought, however, weekly, to the principal office of the works, weighed again, and then placed with that which is already in the depositary.

The general despatch of the produce of the washings to the depôt of the district, commonly takes place every two months during the progress of the operations. When the gold is here delivered, however, it is again weighed, then smelted and reduced to ingots; and twice a-year it is despatched by express caravan to the

mint at St. Petersburg. Here it is coined; and if it be the produce of private mines, it is returned to the proprietors, after a deduction of fifteen and a half per cent., on account of impost due to the government, as well as for expenses for further purifying the gold, and for the coinage.

The platina is not, as with the gold, reduced to ingots in Siberia, but is transported to St. Petersburg in the state in which it is washed.

We had just arrived, as it will be remembered, in the midst of the operations of the gold-washing, when we turned aside to consider the process by which the gold is obtained. The scene was a very lively one. Some workmen were bringing the prepared sand in barrows, to place upon the inclined tables on either side the building; and upon these, the washers were occupied, standing or kneeling, in performing the immediate operation which finally withdraws the precious metal from its last hiding place. We saw some of the gold, in very small particles, as it became quite disembarrassed from the *schlik*, the most tenacious of the sterile substances with which it is combined; and it appeared to us to be too pure to require the further process of drying and blowing, and the application of the loadstone before it was fit for smelting.

The apparition of the pure gold is interesting to behold for the first time. We cannot help meditating upon the causes of the value of the precious metal, and the uses to which these few grains of it are about to be put. What a multitude of speculations would crowd upon our imagination, if we might entertain them, concerning the employment of this little portion of the precious substance, from its first hour of acquaintance with the light, until the epoch perhaps of some new geological revolution upon the surface of our planet, even after the extinction of our species, when it may return again to

lie once more inactive within some future solid rocks, or at the bottom of the sea!

We need not be much at a loss, however, to conjecture the uses of these glittering particles of the reclaimed precious metal while weak mortals possess them. That which was similar to them has been exchanged for kingdoms, has armed warriors whose blood has dyed the ground, enslaved millions, and corrupted many more. Yet has it served to relieve the distressed, built hospitals, and sent forth knowledge to the wild tribes of our species, to the remotest ends of the earth.

We next passed to the extremity of the building, where we found ourselves in the midst of the thumping of the mills and the working of the cylinders in the performance of that portion of the process of obtaining the metals, as above mentioned.

From these scenes, amid the more important and complicated of the works, we were conducted about a verst down the rivulet, which supplies both the water, and the power employed in the works, where, by its banks, we had an opportunity of seeing the re-washing of the sands from an anciently opened auriferous bed. There are here found enormous quantities of sand, which has been washed in an age to which the historic period in relation to Siberia does not reach; but which is sufficient proof that the country has been inhabited since a very remote period. Nevertheless, the process of extracting the gold must then have been very imperfect; for the same sands before washed, now submitted to the process at this time in use, yield as much profit as many of the newly opened beds. Mere temporary sheds were erected here, and the process in the act of performance was simply that of washing upon the inclined tables.

From this we were conducted to the scene of operations upon one of the auriferous beds lately opened.

The bed was of great promise, and thrown open near one of its extremities after the manner above described in cases where the sands are rich and not too deeply buried in the ground; and, as the digging was in operation, we had the opportunity of observing the bed of sand and the substances above it in profile. The upper side of the bed was about thirty feet from the surface of the soil; and, immediately above this, there was a stratum of the same kind of quartz rock which we had seen crushing in the mills.

We returned to Ikaterinburg on the same evening.

CHAP. XV.

IKATERINBURG.

French Inhabitants of Ikaterinburg.—Champagne Supper.—Relations of General Moreau.—Une Femme savante.—Criticisms on French and English Poets.— A gay Professor.— Departure.— Aspect of the Country.— Supper with our Friends at the first Village.—Farewell.

THE day after my visit to the gold mines, two French gentlemen, who were residing at Ikaterinburg, called upon my companion from Nijhni Novgorod and myself, to welcome our arrival in Siberia. One of our visitors was a merchant, and the other a professor of the French language. The professor, after a residence of eleven years in several of the principal towns of Russia, and one year at this place, all the time occupied in the practice of his profession, had now determined to try his fortune further in the interior of the country, and was desirous of embracing the opportunity of accompanying us to Tomsk, the town fixed upon by my fellow-traveller for his intended speculations, and by myself as the most convenient place to repose at, until the setting in of the winter. Some difficulty, however, and some scruples arose on our side concerning such an arrangement, on account of our want of any knowledge of the professor. Our calculation concerning the time we should be in performing this journey under the most favourable circumstances, with the continuance of the fine weather, was about a fortnight; travelling both night and day. But in case the rain or snow, which, in spite of present ap-

pearances and the weather we had hitherto enjoyed, we knew to be near at hand, should commence before the completion of our journey, it was certain we should be much longer. Thus, we had doubts whether it would be wise to risk our comfort for so long a period by agreeing to take up a stranger, who might turn out an indifferent or worse companion, without at least affording ourselves a little time to consider the several bearings of the matter. We, therefore, put off our determination until the next day; and our visitors left us, after we had promised the merchant, in responding to a polite invitation which he gave us, that we would sup with him and meet his friend at his house the same evening.

When we arrived at the merchant's, in accordance with our engagement, we found, besides the professor, another European, in the person of the merchant's mother, who was residing with her son; and we soon found that we were in company that was as agreeable as it was novel to us, after having been, since we commenced our journey, accustomed to eat and drink with none but Russian peasants. Our supper was quite French, and almost equal to the best to be had at a Parisian *restaurant*. The wines were also French—Lafitte, Burgundy, Champagne. But had it not been for the presence of the lady, who, from the serving up of the *potage* to the cutting up of the *gigot*, asked questions concerning all matters in Europe as we seemed to leave them, and answered many which we put in our turn concerning this part at least of Siberia, our supper throughout its course of dishes would have been as dull as if porter had been our beverage, and beef-steaks our sole viand.

As the evening advanced, however, when our host had yet said little, and the professor nothing, the lady's attention was accidentally diverted from the table and our

discourse, upon which the professor took the opportunity to give us a little piece of very useful and timely information in a whisper to myself aside; and which explained, at the same time, the mystery of two silent Frenchmen over a champagne supper.

"*Monsieur*," said the professor "*Madame est une savante; elle écrit: elle est belle-sœur du feu général Moreau.*" Thus, we found ourselves accidentally in the good company of a *femme savante*, who was the sister-in-law, and also with the nephew, of the great — but for one act — Moreau; Monsieur Moreau having been some time settled here.

The hint of the professor was the more opportune, that the conversation was just turning to a criticism in the form of a comparative estimate of French and English poetry, when my natural partiality for that of my own country, might have led me to venture remarks that it would not have been very prudent to make in the presence of a *femme savante*. The conversation, however, continued; and I cannot help reporting one opinion expressed by the *savante Française*, while we conversed upon this matter.

Everybody knows the many excellencies of Racine and Corneille, as well as those of other authors who are generally the most eulogised by French critics, whether upon occasions of mere table-talk, like the present, or at times of more grave discourse. But these were not the subjects which drew forth the eulogy or criticism of this *femme savante*.

"The rigour," said she, as the conversation suggested the remark, "by which our great dramatic writers, who are universally admired, have preserved so nicely the rules of the ancients, has only clogged their fine genius. This we may learn from the effects produced by the writings of one who knew the human heart and our

affections, and what was best calculated to impress and refine them, which should be the very object of poetry, better than all the Greek and Roman writers put together, and yet obeyed no such laws."

The attention of all the party was fully alive, as the *femme savante* thus expressed herself. But with myself there was something more than attention; for I thought it very likely that she designed drawing me into an argument upon the comparative merits of the leading poets of France and England, which I should have been glad to escape. Yet I could not conceive for what French author — and I did not suppose that it could be for any other — this eulogy was intended. However, I remembered the hint of the professor, and remained mute during a moment of expectation, which succeeded this speech. After this, the *femme savante* continued, looking me at the same time earnestly in the face, "and that great one, who was a copyist, indeed, but neither of the Greeks nor of the Romans, but of Nature alone, is your Shakspeare."

A change now took place in the spirit of the entertainment. The dishes had already performed their entrances and their exits, and the red wine had been quite abandoned for the champagne, which was drunk by the Franco-Siberians in a manner that would have done credit to Russians. In the meantime, the lady had retired, and the conversation had become general between the natives of the three several nations to which the party belonged. Gradually, however, the professor became so eloquent and entertaining, as to surprise my German friend and myself. Whether it were, that he was naturally gifted with great conversational powers, which had been wholly restrained by the presence of a *femme savante*, or whether there were inspiration in the champagne, we could not tell; but by his good humour and pleasantry, he soon put

beyond doubt all question concerning the advantages or disadvantages to us of having such a companion for the rest of our journey.

Our future companion then, concerning whom I must now make a few further remarks, was a small active man, probably a little on what we ought to hope will be found the right side of fifty-five — that is, a little above it; and, as he grew warm in the subjects of our discourse, his wit bore down all before it. We had old France and young France painted in such lively colours, in all their foibles and whims, that Louis Philippe, in the midst of his *bourgeoise* court, and Henri de Bordeaux, with his Romish priests around him and the symbols of divine right in his hand, might have sat together, and listened without offence to his quick and harmless pleasantries. His amusing caricatures — and it were well if those of the Parisians were like them — shocked no feeling, whether political or moral, and, I may add, national, though my own country was among the number of those upon which his *jeux d'esprit* fell. We were in an instant of time the worst and the best among the nations, the greatest and the least. Yet with such adroitness did he touch our faults — and it must be admitted we have *some* — that it appeared that the worst which were attributed to us, but which it is not necessary to name, could not be removed without risking the overthrow of the great national edifice of political and moral virtue.

In this manner, we passed away this evening and several hours of the night; and before my companion and myself left the hospitable merchant's dwelling, we gladly engaged the professor to accompany us to Tomsk.

We retired to our hotel, in truth, so pleased with our reception, and the agreeable conversation of those whom we had met, that we laughed more than ever at the terrors generally entertained concerning the

journey before us, since we should be in the good company of the professor, which we now thought ourselves so happy in having secured. "The desert before us," said my German companion, who was also not without a tinge of humour, in spite of the chilling influence of commerce when it engrosses the whole man, "will be a garden in Arabia in such excellent company, and the birches and the spruces of Siberia will be the palms and olives of which you have been talking and regretting the absence during the journey."

Ikaterinburg forms a little break in the journey between Kazan and the interior of Siberia; and it is almost necessary for the traveller to pass a day or two here, as well that he may adjust and re-arrange every thing for entering upon the wide plains before him, where the villages lie far apart, and where he may be sure he can neither replace his vehicle, nor repair any considerable damage it may sustain, as that he may refresh himself by a little change of pursuits or some repose.

We were the more anxious, however, to make our stay here as short as possible, on account of the advance of the season. Rain usually falls, immediately before the setting in of the winter, in such quantity as to retard the traveller, until the ground is frozen, when it is most probable that the snow will have fallen, which will render it necessary for him to exchange his wheeled carriage for a sledge.

The general did not return to Ikaterinburg until we were on the point of departure. I took the opportunity, however, of calling at the government-house as soon as I heard of his arrival; and I was received with much politeness, and invited to dine there that day. But as our arrangements were now all completed, I was not able to accept this invitation.

We were to be accompanied, for the first twenty

versts of our journey, by the French merchant of Ikaterinburg, and by our companion of the last journey, to whose politeness I had been so much indebted during our short stay at this place. All being ready, the two *tarantasses* appeared in the court, and our last fellow-traveller took the professor's place in our carriage, and the two Frenchmen seated themselves in the other.

Our immediate departure upon this new stage of our journey, was very unlike that of my fellow-traveller and myself from Nijhni Novgorod. One would have supposed on that occasion, that we had been launching into the wide ocean in some cockle-shell of a boat, in search of some fabled island; and my fellow-traveller, it will be remembered, was embraced by his friends with a warmth which would not have been much enjoyed by an Englishman.

But here we were nearer the causes of dread to the Russians, which, like moral difficulties with all of us, seem to have a reverse effect to that produced by the prospect of material objects of terror, and grow less instead of greater as we approach them; and, after shaking hands with the landlord, we jumped into our vehicles, and gaily departed.

The country through which we passed during the first hours of our first journey in Siberia, was similar to that between Ikaterinburg and the mines; but the roads or tracks were level, and better, indeed, than any we had passed over since we left Nijhni Novgorod, with the exception of the best in the government of Perm.

At the place at which the party proceeding and the party returning were to separate, there was a small hamlet of free peasants, called Kossoulina. Here we alighted, and entered the court-yard of one of the houses, at the suggestion of the Frenchmen, who now produced a large basket of extra provisions, of a kind which it was easy to discover by some very long-necked

bottles, which were peeping out from the straw in which they were packed.

The good man of the house came out of his door within the court, to offer us the best quarters his dwelling afforded; but as the weather was as clear and serene as it had been long wont to be, we preferred remaining in the open air; and, with the ground for our table, we sat down upon some logs of wood, to partake of our little parting supper.

The Frenchmen now exposed the contents of their basket, in which the solids bore about the same proportion to the liquids, that the pennyworth of bread bore to the quantity of sack in Falstaff's bill at the Boar's Head in Eastcheap. My fellow-traveller from Nijhni Novgorod and myself were both disposed to abstinence; but we were in gay and agreeable company, and upon the first hours of a journey across the dreary steppe before us, and our Anglo-Danish late fellow-traveller and our new Gallic friends proposed toasts to the Sovereign of the country in which we were travelling, to the young Queen, "throned by the West," and to the King of the French; and we could not wholly resist the accompaniments to the loyalty and mirth in which we willingly united. And if we had been before delighted with the sallies of wit of our future fellow-traveller we were certainly no less so on this occasion. There must, however, be a limit to the time of enjoyment snatched by the traveller from the hours that belong to a journey; and before the sun set, the two parties had mounted their vehicles, and they now took their opposite ways.

CHAP. XVI.

JOURNEY FROM EKATERINBURG TOWARDS TOMSK.

Remarks on the Natural Features of the Country.—The Races by which Siberia is inhabited.— Conquest of the Country.—Settlement.— Political Division.—The Road.—Aspect of the Country Villages.— Houses of the Peasants.— Agreeable Periods of long Journeys.— Disappointed with the Company of our new Companion.— Rigour of the Climate partially compensated by the Richness of the Soil.— Arrival at Tiumen.—Walk in the Town. — Bazaar.

BEFORE we proceed further into the vast territory which we have now entered, it seems incumbent to make a few brief remarks upon the great natural features of the country, the races by which it is inhabited, its conquest, its settlement, and its present political divisions.

According to the received geographical estimates of the comparative extent of the different districts into which the continents and islands of the globe are divided, the superficies of this portion of the Russian empire exceeds that of all Europe by many thousands of square miles. Nevertheless, Siberia may be considered as in some measure isolated and detached from the rest of the continent of which it forms so considerable a portion; and this, both on account of the character of its boundaries, which are formed for the most part by remarkable mountains and inaccessible coasts, and by the peculiar course of its rivers, which, with the exception of a few inconsiderable streams upon its eastern shores, all fall into the Arctic Sea, beyond the reach of ships at all seasons.

The most remarkable of the natural features of this great country, are its steppes, its rivers, its mountains, and its forests.

We shall err but little, if we divide the entire surface of Siberia, in relation to its general character and aspect, into two parts—the great western steppe, which comprehends about one-third of the whole superficies of the country, and extends from the Ural Mountains to the River Yenessei, and the hilly districts which lie eastward of this steppe, and extend from the Yenessei to the Pacific Ocean. At the same time, the country generally is more level towards the north, and more hilly towards the south, throughout its entire longitudinal extent. It may be considered to consist of an inclined plane, the higher portion of which is formed by the Altai Mountains, which in many parts rise above the line of perpetual snow in these latitudes, while the lower portion terminates upon the sterile and bleak coasts of the Arctic Sea.

Almost the whole of the northern portion of the country, as far as yet explored, is covered with morass land, while the regions of the middle latitudes are composed chiefly of plains and hilly districts, abounding in grass, and in the shrubs and trees of the climate, and those of the southern, in higher lands producing dense and luxuriant forests.

But by far the most remarkable of the natural features of the country are its mighty rivers. From the Altai Mountains, along the whole line of their course, flow innumerable streams, which unite as they proceed towards the north, till they finally compose three of the mightiest of all the rivers that fertilize the earth, and add their thousand blessings to its varied inhabitants. These three grand rivers are, the Ob, which is the most western; the Yenessei, which is the central; and the Lena, which is the most eastern; all of

which, after flowing through long and circuitous courses, at length fall, as above stated, into the Arctic Sea.

Of the mountains of Siberia, the Ural and the Altai ranges, which form the boundaries of the country upon the west and upon the south, are the most remarkable. But to these must be added the Slavonai Girbirge range, which runs nearly parallel with the coasts of the Sea of Ochotsk, and the yet mightier and more magnificent range, which almost composes the grand peninsula of Kamtschatka.

The population of Siberia is rather estimated than ascertained with any degree of exactness, to be about two millions, and is probably composed of a greater variety of nations than is to be found in the same amount of population in any other part of the globe. The number of the nations or tribes, upon the authority of those Russians who have had the amplest opportunities of knowing the state of the country, is said to be no less than twenty-one. But the element into which all the moral qualities of all the native tribes will no doubt ultimately merge, is decidedly Russian. The Russians at present in the country, however, consist merely of merchants, of adventurers, and of exiles of the present day and the descendants of those of an earlier age, and of the officers and civil servants of the government, and some voluntary colonists, bearing together no proportion to the numbers of the aboriginal population.

Of the many native tribes of this country, it will be sufficient for our purpose to enumerate those only which are the most important, and which will fall under our observation as we proceed.

The first of the tribes whose territory we shall pass over, are the Kirgeeze, who occupy the eastern and south-eastern portion of the grand steppe. The next in importance are the Bouriats, who possess an exten-

sive tract of country bordering upon China, in the eastern districts of Siberia. The next to these will be the Yakutes, who occupy the north-eastern territory, as far as the country of that people whom we shall have afterwards more particularly to mention, who remain still unsubdued by the Russian arms. Another remarkable tribe, some of whom we shall also have occasion to see, is the Tungouze. This people are spread over, not only all the northern regions of Siberia, but also over the tracts inhabited by the more settled tribes, across whose territory they pass in their regular migrations, northwards in the spring, and southwards in the autumn, still following the lives of hunters, alike undisturbed by the settled tribes, and unrestrained by the Russians save in the exaction of a small tribute consisting of furs, and called *Yasac*, which is equally paid, indeed, by all the tribes that have not yet advanced the first step towards civilisation, and been admitted to the privileges of Russian subjects.

With respect to the settlement of Siberia, we are informed, that the first people in any way connected with the more enlightened portions of the globe, which penetrated into the country, were unquestionably the Mahommedans of the Turkestan race. But it does not appear that they advanced further than the limits of the great western steppe, or that they even obtained any certain information concerning the regions that lie further towards the east and the north. Such of the annals, however, of the country, as appear the most worthy of credit, relate, that about the year 1580, a band of robbers, led by a Cossack adventurer, who had for some time infested the eastern districts of Russia, having been overcome by the Czar of Moscovy, retreated across the Ural Mountains, and attacked and subdued a portion of the country, which they found in the possession of Gingis Khan, the earlier conqueror of the

native inhabitants. Not long after this expedition, however, the Cossack leader offered his conquest to the Czar, upon condition of an amnesty for his depredations in Russia; and the terms being accepted, the Russians became the masters of the new territory. The Cossacks, nevertheless, pursued their conquests eastward, in the service of the Czar, until their course was arrested by the death of their leader, who was drowned in the River Irtysch in the year 1584.

Some time subsequent to this, small parties of adventurers among the Russians advanced further into the country, and subdued province after province, until they reached the eastern coasts of the continent, in or about the year 1639. The entire country, however, which the Russians now possess, was not subdued until about the year 1658.

The whole of Siberia under the Russians, was formerly comprised within one government, of which Tobolsk was the capital. But the country is now divided into two grand governments, which are called Eastern and Western Siberia; and each of these is divided into several lesser governments. Western Siberia comprises the governments of Omsk, Tobolsk, Tomsk, and Yenessei; and Eastern Siberia those of Irkutsk, Ochotsk, Yakutsk, and that of the great peninsula of Kamtschatka. The present seat of government of Western Siberia is at Omsk, and that of Eastern Siberia at Irkutsk.

The night was fine and clear, and the moon was near the full, as we entered upon the great Siberian steppe. We made our first change at a hamlet inhabited by a few herdsmen, and arrived after midnight at the village of Béleika, where we stopped to make our second change. We made a second supper, also, at this village upon excellent *stchee*, rye bread, and rich cream; and with these, and the free use of the herbaceous beverage

of the Chinese, the Russians, and the English, at least the two more moderate of the party at the last repast, succeeded in neutralising the effects of the wines of France, of which we had all made indeed too free use. After this, we returned to our *tarantass*, and again proceeded on our rapid way.

This part of the steppe is still inhabited by the Kirgeeze. Throughout the track, however, over which the traveller passes, there is a continuous line of villages, originating in, and still almost wholly dependent upon, the trade which they facilitate between China and Russia; and these are, for the most part, inhabited by a Russo-Siberian population, formed from the descendants of former exiles and private adventurers, who differ very little in character and manners from the great mass of the population of Russia in Europe, though they are entirely free from the restraint of serfdom, which is not a part of the law of the land in Siberia, as we shall have occasion to see, when some more particular remarks force themselves upon our attention concerning the institutions of the country.

The road continued good, and the country presented every where the same wild and gloomy aspect, with here and there only such little cultivation, and plantations of barley, rye, and oats, as might be necessary to supply the wants of the herdsmen, and travellers and their horses, and some cattle that are raised here, during the time that the snow entirely covers the fallen grass.

Nothing could exceed the serenity and beauty of the first night of our journey upon the great steppe, and, as the moon had risen before the sun set, we had the cheerful certainty, that the ever-welcome satellite must earlier or later in the night, be our companion, and a lamp to light us across the dreary wastes of country before us, until near the end of our journey. The lone orb is as precious to the traveller whose journeys

are by night, as to the navigator, whose trackless path lies across unfrequented seas. If famishing wolves attacked our horses, or threatened ourselves, we could see to shoot them. If robbers of our own species appeared, at least they could not stab in the dark. And as the effects of the wine wholly passed away, even the Frenchman appeared to become contemplative; and we sat and silently enjoyed the beauty of the night, until, weary with the fatigues of the preceding day, we all reclined upon our convenient couches, and fell sound asleep.

Upon the second day of our journey, as the morning dawned, we came to a small village; and as we had to change horses here, we alighted to take our accustomed tea. All the herdsmen, which comprehended the entire population of the place, were, with the exception of a few old men, tending their cattle at a distance. But we had no difficulty in procuring horses; and after we had refreshed ourselves, we took a little leisure stroll, and occupied our time in examining the houses and premises, like architects in search of new ideas, and in making such remarks as we were able, upon the manner of life of the inhabitants of the great steppe.

The houses here are constructed of wood, and usually of logs laid upon one another, over which rises a high roof, similar to that of the houses of the villages in Russia. Those between the two extremes, in regard to dimensions and accommodation, of which the one where we now breakfasted was a fair example, are of one story, and consist of two rooms, and a loft partially floored, which forms the common sleeping apartment. They are generally in the form of a long square, and have gable ends facing the road, and a door in the court or waste space which separates the buildings indeed of every class, in the Russian or Siberian villages, from one another. In the centre of the house stands a mass of

brickwork, occupying a large portion of the interior, and containing the stove and oven. Upon the side of the door there is a small hall, the object of which is to admit of a second door, to prevent the penetration of the cold into the apartments when the outer door is opened in the winter. From this, another door leads on either side to a distinct room; and upon the opposite side of the house, there is sometimes a passage between the principal apartments, and sometimes a small room entered from one of the larger.

In one of the two principal rooms is the oven, in which the fire is made in the same manner as in those of our bake-houses. In this everything is cooked, and all the heat is produced which warms the house. The heat which proceeds from it, indeed, is sometimes so great, in consequence of the disproportion between the size of the brickwork in which it is set, and of the apartments, that at this season we often found it beyond endurance. But the opportunity will occur again to speak of this remarkable contrivance for warming the houses, after we have experienced its advantages at the colder season. In the warmest weather, however, the cooking is generally done out of doors, where we were several times, even now, obliged to take our meals, in consequence of the heat within. The other of the two larger rooms in houses of this construction, is generally reserved for the conductors of caravans, and merchants and others, whom the peasants furnish with horses.

Each of these two rooms has either one or two small windows, with one pane in each, which in this part of Siberia is sometimes of glass and sometimes of talc. Of moveable furniture, they usually contain no more than some benches, which are placed round the walls, and a table, which stands in one of the corners, and is commonly reserved for the use of strangers.

Such of the houses as are superior to these, are

generally found in the villages at which the government has post stations. They are built after the same plan, but have three rooms or four, formed by dividing one or both of the ordinary apartments of the house. But the houses differing in the scale downwards in dimensions and conveniences, have but one very small room, which is sometimes a mere hovel, with a chimney and oven in the centre.

It had been colder during the past night, than at any time since we crossed the mountains; but, after the sun rose, the temperature of the atmosphere was not lower than during the average of October days in England; and the weather was as fine as that which we had hitherto enjoyed.

I have remarked, after many sea-voyages, whether impelled by wind or by vapour, that with most travellers, the first two or three days that we are on ship-board, and the last two or three, are the least tedious or the most agreeable. No doubt, in the first of these instances, this is the effect of the change which we experience in our daily pursuits and habits, which is oftener perhaps than all of us will allow, a source of positive pleasure. In the second instance, there can be little doubt that the relief or pleasure which we experience, arises from the approach of the moment at which we anticipate the termination of a voyage perhaps long become monotonous and wearisome. But, notwithstanding the greater number and variety of incidents which attend long journeys by land, in comparison with those ordinarily experienced at sea, even in such countries as that in which we are now travelling, I believe that the spirits are in both cases affected at the same periods in precisely the same manner.

Under these impressions, it has been my custom upon protracted journeys to divide them into certain different portions according to attendant circumstances, and not

in time and distance merely, but in relation to all that regards the remembrance of the past and the anticipation of the future. Accordingly, it will have been perceived, that a distinct journey was regarded as commencing at Nijhni Novgorod, and was ended at Kazan, where we first entered the ancient Tatar portion of the empire; and that another journey began with our departure from that city, and terminated at the summit of the mountains, where we bade farewell to Russia in Europe, to enter the wide expanse of country now before us, and in which Tomsk is the limit of our present anticipations.

By adopting this plan, those who travel in countries disagreeable to pass through, will certainly diminish the pain they must encounter, and those who pass through countries where the very act of travelling is agreeable, will as certainly augment their pleasures. But what may be also of some importance, those who write accounts of long journeys may, by adopting the same plan in the relation of continuous incidents, proportionably relieve the tediousness that must attend unbroken narration.

My German friend and myself were, at this period of our travels, in the spirits that quite accorded with the supposition of our now commencing a new journey. But such was the state of dejection in which we found our new fellow-traveller, that we were, at first, apprehensive that he was suffering from positive sickness; and when we found, upon alighting this morning from the *tarantass*, that this was not the case, we were the more surprised to see one who was but yesterday so gay and full of humour, appear now at our cheerful morning meal, with a countenance as gloomy as that of a snow-housed Esquimaux. Instead, indeed, of finding we had made any addition to the sources of our enjoyments by the society of our new travelling companion,

we seemed to have condemned ourselves to the company of one whom champagne alone could raise to the level of ordinary good humour. Thus, if little mention be further made of the third person in our *tarantass* during this journey, it will be because we found no champagne upon the road, without which our professor seemed quite incapable of making even such remarks as those with which most sojourners of no more than a few months in a foreign land are able to entertain those newly arrived, without the necessity of so much as a glass of *quass*.

As we continued our journey, the sun rose directly before us; and, as the day advanced, not a vapour nor the smallest cloud stained the fair face of heaven; and the cool air of the past night was soon succeeded by a comfortable degree of genial warmth.

Nothing, indeed, seemed wanting to fill us with content, and to enable us in imagination to convert the unpeopled wastes of Siberia into the smiling vales of some southern land.

Our common mother, Nature, is said to compensate every where with one hand, what she more sparingly bestows with the other. If we consider impartially her bounty and her parsimony, regarding the blessings she has vouchsafed, with the deprivations with which she has accompanied them in this part of Siberia, we shall find no exception to this law.

Climate and soil are, no doubt, among the natural causes which favour or restrain the advance of civilisation, and modify and form the distinctions of character among the varieties of our species. In the country through which we are now passing, although in the same parallel of latitude as Moscow, the snow lies upon the ground, or the earth remains frozen, for between seven or eight months in the year, and the labours incident to the rural economy practised by the in-

habitants, are usually suspended for about nine months. Yet is this disadvantage in climate in a wonderful degree compensated, and its effects modified, by the earth's extreme fertility. The soil is here composed of a fine black mould, and very probably, as subsequent observation of similar soils, the origin of which could not be questioned, has induced me to think, of decomposed volcanic matter. Such, indeed, are the fertilizing qualities of this soil and their durability, that the composts, or the use in any way of stable or any other manure is here unknown, although rye, barley, and oats, are cultivated in more than sufficient quantities for the consumption of the inhabitants. In the meantime, the surface of the ground is covered with a wild, coarse, long grass, which affords ample provision for herds of cattle during the year. In the summer they graze upon it at large, and fatten; and during the winter, they subsist upon the fallen grass of the past summer, which they rake from beneath the snow, where it lies withered in great abundance throughout the plains.

We took our accustomed dinner to-day of *stchee*, eggs, milk, and tea, at the village of Pilaésa.

As far as we had yet proceeded, the villages through which we passed, were inhabited by the descendants of ancient Russian exiles and colonists. Here and there, however, we saw some huts, which we learned belonged to the Kirgeeze, some of which people we had seen at Nijhni Novgorod. The Kirgeeze are a nomadic tribe, inhabiting this part of Siberia, but none of whom we had yet seen in their proper country.

Early upon the third day of our journey, we arrived at the district town of Tiumen.

Tiumen is situated within the government of Tobolsk, upon the River Tiura, which falls, with the waters of several other streams, into the Irtysch, which is one of

the branches of the great River Ob. It is a kind of domestic Nijhni Novgorod. Lying directly in the highway of the great commercial intercourse of the Russian empire in Europe and Asia, it has become the chief commercial depôt for all that portion of Western Siberia which is watered by the Ob and its numerous tributaries, even to Tomsk.

As we drove into the caravansary of the town, my enterprising commercial companion found the waggons which he had despatched from Kazan during our detention there, which relieved him from some anxiety that he had experienced concerning their safety.

As we were to remain here a few hours, we took the occasion, which was the first that had offered since we left Ikaterinburg, of thoroughly cleansing ourselves from the dust and dirt which our persons, our beds, and all that belonged to us had imbibed. Our conveniences for washing, though not very elegant, were very suitable to our condition. They consisted of tubs filled with water, and set by the side of a fresh well, though this was in the midst of the caravansary, and of all the noise and confusion caused by several hundred horses of some caravans just arrived, with the half-wild drivers which accompanied them.

The first of duties, and so agreeable to perform, being accomplished, we sat down to a meal, similar to that of which we had been accustomed to partake among the peasants, with the addition of an ample supply of river fish, of a kind which much resembled the sterlet in appearance, though inferior to that fish in size and in flavour.

After our meal, we walked out to take a view of the town. Tiumen has its upper and lower town, like the site of the celebrated fair. The two parts are separated by a deep fissure or ravine, which seemed like the bed of an ancient river, and over which has been

thrown a bridge. The caravansary is situated in the lower town, which appeared to be inhabited chiefly by a very poor and dirty set of people. But in the upper town there is a *gostinnoi dvor*, in the stalls of which are to be found everything that belongs to the particular commerce of the town. This mart of retail trade is situated at the top of the rise, in the upper town, with its principal stalls upon the public way. An inspection of the chief articles exhibited for sale here did not impress us favourably with the character of the domestic life of the inhabitants of the Siberian towns; nor did the company we met with, give us a very cheering prospect of what we might expect to find as we advanced into the country. There was little for sale above the coarsest goods of Russian manufacture. And the thoroughfares along the lines of stalls facing the road, were filled with the most ruffianly-looking set of rascals that we had any where seen. We heard, however, that we had not a fair specimen of the Siberians of the towns before us, those we saw being chiefly inhabitants of some of the purely penal villages in the vicinity, who were accustomed to seek employment here at this season.

CHAP. XVII.

JOURNEY FROM IKATERINBURG TOWARDS TOMSK — *continued.*

Departure from Tiumen.— Character of the Roads.— Aspect of the Country.— Extreme Fertility of the Soil.— Burning of a Loaded Waggon.—The Kirgeeze.—Their Personal Appearance. — Origin. — Women. — Hospitality. — Mode of Life. — Their Warlike Disposition. — Leave-taking. — Desert Country. — A Siberian Genius.—A Painted Chamber.—Beating a *Yemstçhik.* —Passage of the River Irtysch.—A Forest.

We left Tiumen early in the evening of the 12th of the month, and now entered upon a plain, where the uniformity of the scene which presented itself to us on all sides was only occasionally relieved by small patches of stunted birch trees and a few dwarf firs. But as the day drew towards a close, the contemplation of the azure above our heads, as it gradually changed to the deeper shades of the evening sky, well compensated for the absence of every thing to attract attention amidst the dreary wastes around.

The approach of night was never more beautiful. As the sun was about to set, the moon, now at the full, was just rising above the dark line of the horizon which bounded the view towards the opposite quarter of heaven. Not a cloud, nor the thinnest vapour, obstructed a ray of the brighter orb, as he gradually approached his setting, nor of the softer light of the satellite about to reign alone in the firmament. And shortly after the sun had disappeared, we had, quite unexpectedly, the satisfaction of witnessing a lunar eclipse; for we had not observed in our calendars that

this gratifying phenomenon, which stands in the same relation to science that miracles stand to religion, was to take place at this time.

We had not had, since we crossed the mountains, any just reason to complain of the condition of the roads, which may be said to depend at all times in all parts of Siberia upon the season and the state of the weather, both of which had been in our favour. The summer roads, in fact, are formed merely by the passage of wheeled carriages, and lie often through high or withered and fallen grass, where mere tracks have been made by the necessary deviations of carriages from the direct way, on account of the condition of the ground during the prevalence of the rains in autumn and spring. Every difficulty on this account, however, which attends the traveller in Siberia, is confined to these two seasons. The drought which hardens the ways in summer for wheel carriages, and the snow which enables the sledges to run in winter, have almost equally advantageous effects. The Russian Government, too, has not been inattentive to the necessities of the traveller; and sign-posts have been placed upon the grand thoroughfare at convenient intervals, without which it would be sometimes difficult to find the tracks in summer, and they could never be discovered after the first fall of snow in winter.

The country around us, after quitting Tiumen, was more dreary than usual, until the first morning opened, when we found ourselves rapidly passing by large groves of young and fresh birches and spruces, set at intervals, and resembling what are called in Canada woods of "second growth," by which is meant, the young forests which are succeeding those that have been destroyed by fire, or by the axe of the woodman, and where the ground has been left to reproduce its abundance, which Nature never fails to determine shall

be trees of a different species from those which preceded them. The high and strong grass, too, every where indicated the extreme fertility of the soil. In the afternoon of this day, we passed several small villages, at the distance of twenty-five and thirty-five versts apart; and, wherever the ground was exposed, we found the soil, which, since we left Ikaterinburg, we had observed every where to be of a dark colour and of an open texture, now composed of a perfectly black and fine mould.

There was a very little cultivation about these villages; but spots of ground at intervals gave the stranger the idea of there having been formerly much more. All, however, that we could learn on this subject was, that this part of the country had at one time been more thickly populated by the Kirgeeze, and had abounded more in herds of wild cattle, which, as the commerce with the trans-Ural countries had increased, had been driven into the more remote districts, or were much diminished in number.

On the morning of the third day after leaving Tiumen, we passed over a country similar to that through which our track lay during the early part of the preceding day, and we had a view of several lakes upon our right hand. In the middle of the day, we dined at a small village called Burona, and in the evening we supped at that of Abatskaia.

At Abatskaia there are two fairs held annually, each of which lasts eight days. One of them commences upon the 11th of July, which is near the earliest period of the dry season to be depended upon, and the other upon the 18th of January, when the snow roads are sure to be good. There was a little neat church here, painted, and forming the prettiest object as a building that we had seen since we crossed the mountains.

On the fourth day of our journey we dined at

Tiukalinsk. Here we heard of the burning by accident of a loaded carriage on its way from Nijhni Novgorod to Omsk. The vehicle, as we were informed, while driving at a rapid rate, had caught fire from the friction of the wheels, and been consumed in a few minutes with fine goods valued at 30,000 rubles. Whatever might have been the cause of this accident, it is certain that it was not the want of grease; for we found even bear's grease every where so plentiful, that the peasants, sometimes at a single village, bedaubed our axle with as much of this precious article of the toilet in Western Europe, as would have supplied a perfumer's shop for a year.

On the fifth day, we made our first acquaintance with the Kirgeeze race upon their own domain. Early in the afternoon, we observed several men sitting round a fire near the road, and engaged, as we supposed, in guarding some cattle near at hand, which we did not see; and we stopped and alighted to exchange greetings with them, and gratify our curiosity concerning any traits we might be able to observe in their manner of life.

We perceived, as we approached the party, that they were sitting by a small fire, over which, suspended by three sticks, hung an iron pot. As soon as we came near to them, before any speech was attempted on either side, they made signs, taking for granted that that would be the only means of intercourse between us, to seat ourselves beside them; and we accepted the easily understood invitation, determined at least to see them well, if we could not converse with them. We were not long, however, before we found that one of their party, notwithstanding their resort to dumb-signs, was acquainted with a few words of the Russian tongue; and the use which he made of these greatly aided us in the discourse we now contrived to carry on.

With the personal appearance of the Kirgeeze we were already sufficiently familiar. This people are usually called by the Russians by the simple epithet of Kirgeeze, but sometimes, in reference to their supposed origin, Kirgeeze Cossacks. But if we may judge from the natural traits generally referred to, to govern the judgment in what relates to the varieties in our species, there can be little room for the supposition that they have more Caucasian blood in their constitution, than they may chance to have received at the period of the Cossack conquest of their portion of the country. No two semi-barbarous people inhabiting nearly parallel latitudes, as it seemed to us, could be more dissimilar than these Kirgeeze and the Cossacks. Both, indeed, are rather low in stature, and broad-shouldered and muscular. But in the more distinguishing marks of the races of men, drawn on the features of the face, and written in the expression of the countenance, there seems little common to the two tribes. The countenance of the Cossack is open and lively, and the features of his face are not strongly impressed with the Asiatic traits; whereas the Kirgeeze have the high cheek-bones, and deep-set and rather small eye of the Mongol Tatars, with an expression of countenance that seemed at least to us the very reverse of agreeable. Much less does this pastoral race resemble the well-proportioned, open-featured Western Tatars, whose easy and sometimes elegant manners mark his race to be Turkestan or Caucasian, in spite of a higher cheek-bone than is commonly the trait of the races of that origin. It seems therefore most probable, that the Kirgeeze are of Mongolian descent, like their neighbours the Kalmucs, about whose origin no doubt seems to have arisen. But, if it were discovered to be otherwise, the comparison between the proper Tatars and this race would furnish a practical example of importance to

those who might be engaged in investigating the effects of the moral progress of our species upon the expression of the countenance, and the form of the features of the face. If the Western or Mussulman Tatar be not yet quite in the right road to the right paradise, at least none of the human race are farther removed than all his tribe from the Paganism which is still the moral distinguishing trait of the Kirgeeze.

Our new half-wild friends were dressed as we had seen others of the tribe, in *shoubas* or pelisses of sheep-skins, and caps and mocassins of bullocks' hides. They were unshorn; but they had a very little hair on their faces, in comparison with the abundance with which nature has furnished the Russian race.

We had not proceeded far with the discourse which we were attempting to carry on with these Kirgeeze, when, suddenly, though we did not see a bramble near the spot where we sat that might shelter a hare, appeared before us three women, as withered and as wild in their attire as the weird sisters upon the Scottish heath near Fores; and, before we had time to recover from our surprise at their appearance, two or three young women, and girls and boys, were seen to rise like sprights out of the ground at a few yards' distance from where we were sitting. Upon this we approached the spot from which the last party rose, that we might solve the mystery of the strange apparition; and here we found a hole in the ground that was entered by an inclined plane, and which we learned was the only dwelling and place of refuge of these people as well from the heat of the sun of July, as the winter storms and the piercing winds which at all seasons pass over the wild steppe.

But though the women, by their mysterious and sudden appearance, could not fail to remind an Englishman of the prophetic sisters above mentioned, yet,

instead of being to us omens of evil, they proved the aids for the display of Kirgeeze hospitality.

All the time we were carrying on our difficult discourse, we had perceived that the cauldron was boiling; and as it was about noon, and we had had nothing but our early meal, our appetites were not a little excited by the savoury vapours that proceeded from what was evidently a brave mess of *stchee*, or a stew, at least, of the most substantial component of that famous *potage*. And the women had scarcely arrived, before two of the elder of them removed the cauldron from the fire and placed it on the ground, as if they had come for that purpose, and then retired to their subterraneous abode, with all the rest that had followed them when they appeared.

The men now rose, and in taking their seats around the cauldron, made signals to us to do the same; and the feast began, by one of them handing to one of our party a small wooden bowl attached to a stick about six inches long, and which he had previously dipped in the cauldron and filled with thick rich soup. This being handed about, we did very well, as far as the liquid portion of the mess went, but the more solid portion we were obliged to fish up with our fingers; and, as the soup was very hot, and our fingers were not quite so near fire-proof as those of the Kirgeeze, we were for some time in almost as bad a plight as the fox invited to dine with the crane, into whose dinner vessels he could not thrust his mouth. In time, however, we succeeded in getting enough to be able to pronounce the Kirgeeze mess excellent. Nothing could be more tender and delicious than the beef, which had been slowly stewed with Russian care, which it would be happy for us in England if our cooks would imitate, and wanted nothing of the best *stchee* in the empire, save its ordinary component, and the corrective of its

sometimes too great richness — good cabbage, of which there was none.

When our appetites were well satisfied, we sent our *yemstchik*, who had joined us while we were over the *stchee*, to fetch our chiboocks. In the meantime, we made signs that we should like to see the subterraneous dwellings of our friends; at which all the party rose, and conducted us, without the smallest hesitation, to the place to which the women, after their short visit, had retired.

We now descended by an inclined plane to a cavern which seemed to differ only from that made by the rabbits, in its dimensions, which were in proportion to the larger size of its tenants. We found all the women and children we had before seen, seated upon a carpet of dried grass and skins; and there were hatchets or tomahawks, and some other simple and useful articles lying about upon the ground. But such was the filthiness of the hovel, and consequently our haste to return to the free-air, that we had little time for observation of any thing that might have been more remarkable within it. Such, however, is the mode of living of this semi-barbarous race, who may be said to dwell beneath the ground, save only when, as with many of the wild animals, they are driven from their retreats by the rains in autumn, and the melting of the snow in spring.

Exceptions to this manner of life are, however, to be found among the Kirgèeze, some evidence of which we had already seen at a distance from their native plains. In these cases, they have tents or wigwams, formed of poles spread at the foot and gathered at the top, and in winter, covered with felt made of the hair of the deer and buried several feet in the snow, but with mere twigs or dried grass, to shade them from the sun in summer. Their black cattle and sheep are never put under any shelter whatsoever.

After the hospitality which we had received from these shepherds of the steppe, we could not depart without enjoying a few moments of the pastime of the country, the everlasting chiboock; so we seated ourselves again, and the more willingly, as we were now in the company of the women and the children, who had come up to take in their turn the noon meal.

We had now a better opportunity of making some remarks upon the women. Their dress was very nearly the same as that of the men. Of any peculiar beauty they might have possessed in the eyes of the men of their race, we at least were not sensible. They wore, however, a much gayer air than the men. But this is a trait in the character of their sex, so constantly observed in every condition of society, even to that of absolute slavery, as to seem a universal law of Nature.

Little is known of the proper social life of this people, even by the Russo-Siberians, who trade with them. No doubt it is patriarchal, from the same causes which from the earliest periods of history have, in a greater or less degree, prevailed among the inhabitants of a purely pastoral land. Their disposition is more warlike than that of the greater part of the aborigines of Siberia. They did not submit to the Russian yoke without a sanguinary struggle, and they have often risen again in arms, and carried on war with their conquerors, which has obliged the Government to keep a considerable force of regular troops distributed through a line of forts, which is maintained on this steppe.

Our hosts became very dull as we puffed our chiboocks, and, as we were a little avaricious of our time, we made signs to them of our wish to depart; and, at the same time, we urged with them an exchange of some of our tobacco for some of theirs, which was abominable, merely in order to give them an especial regale after we were gone.

As we took leave of them, we placed our hands upon our hearts, in making such signs of our gratification as we thought most likely to be understood. But though they imitated our example, it was plain that this was not their customary mode of expressing their feelings in taking leave. After this, we remounted our *tarantass* and proceeded on our journey.

Our road during the rest of the day lay across a country the most desolate we had seen, without a shrub or any other herb than the usually abundant wild grass. Towards evening we arrived at a small village amidst this desolation, which did not appear to have an acre of cultivated land attached to it, and which we found inhabited exclusively by herdsmen, save a few possessors of horses kept for the use of the caravans.

We had little expectation of finding any thing here, to relieve a certain weariness with which we were now more than commonly oppressed. Nevertheless, after making our bargain for our horses, we were led into a room belonging to a peasant from whom we had hired them, in which the curious paintings with which it was decorated afforded us all the relief we required; while the conveniences about the apartment seemed to indicate that we were in quarters where we should find a good supper before we returned to our *tarantass*.

The worthy tenant of this cottage had been a soldier, and had been at Paris at the time of the occupation of the French capital by the allied armies; and there, and upon his marches, he had acquired abundance of knowledge, which he determined should not perish with him, or rot unused, while there were any means by which he might disperse his precious stores, and instruct and benefit his present Siberian brethren. He could, however, neither read nor write; but this refined means of conveying and acquiring knowledge, indeed, would have been of no avail, unless others — and

none were yet so learned here — could do the same Thus, it seemed to him, that in a country where reading was too high a step in learning for the people to have attained, it would be praiseworthy to teach, by any means that might be made intelligible; and he thought nothing could be more certainly so than painting, of which art he believed he had caught a little of the inspiration necessary to accomplish his ends, in visiting the public galleries of the German and French towns in which he had been quartered.

This was an especially natural suggestion for a Russian peasant. The unschooled, even in St. Petersburg and Moscow, learn by means of paintings what the shops of those cities contain, just as the same classes in our country, a few generations back, were wont to learn the contents of the shops in our towns, or what were the particular trades of the inmates of certain houses, if the barbers' and publicans' signs be, as I believe it is well known, the relics of a former more general custom. In order, then, to carry out his plan, he had first stuccoed the walls of his principal room, and afterwards figured upon their surface some of the more remarkable incidents of his campaigns, with many wonders that he had seen, and also others that he had only heard of, in Europe.

The first object which attracted our particular attention among the paintings, was a gallant ship, well tempest-tossed, upon a rolling sea. This appeared, however, to be among those which the artist had represented either from his recollection of paintings he had seen, or from descriptions, and with the aid of the imagination; for, though he had marched thousands of miles, and passed some time in the capital of one of the maritime nations of Europe, yet had he seen neither a ship nor the sea. The vessel represented was in form very much like the crescent moon, and had three

masts, and was reeling by the force of the wind and the sea, and had at the top of the middle mast, a single sail set, which bore about the same proportion to the hull of the ship, as "a woman's apron," in sea-phrase, bears to a ship's mainsail. She was a man-of-war, too, as appeared from her guns, which were of enormous and disproportionate length, unless the painter instinctively applied the rule of art by which Raffaello places several fishermen of such gigantic stature in a boat that a single one of them would have been sufficient to sink her. This, however, was not the happiest essay of his genius.

The next object represented, that drew our attention, was a palace which resembled the dwelling of a European sovereign in the same particulars as that of King Otho at Athens resembles the buildings of antiquity of which it overlooks the remains; that is, it had length, breadth, and depth, and these all very great.

The next wall we turned towards presented half the quadruped and biped animals of the creation, which were grazing and prowling about in an open and extensive forest. The trees were a little difficult to distinguish in kind. The most remarkable, had the tall straight trunks of pines, with round thick tops, just like the mulberry-trees raised in some countries for feeding silk-worms. The reason of this, however, was accounted for by the facility which it gave of providing ground enough to exhibit the numerous tribes of animals assembled in the forest. Some of these, whether fabulous or real, our zoological knowledge did not enable us to name. The king of beasts was however very distinct; and, though his countenance presented something very much like a laugh, he was in fact tranquilly sitting on his haunches, engaged in contemplating all the various kinds of birds and four-footed animals, his subjects, distributed about the wood. Among the more remarkable of these, we seemed to

observe ostriches, peacocks, camels, asses, monkeys, leopards, tigers, and elephants.

Another wall exhibited a whole garden of trees, bearing large red hearts growing at the extremities of the branches, which the painter informed us he meant as an Allegory, signifying, that the life of man which was figured in the heart, like the fruit of the tree, endured but three seasons. During the first season, he said, we grow like the fruit, during the second, flourish, and early or late in the third, perish. Upon another wall, there were rivers abounding in fish, which the artist had contrived should be seen from the surface to the bottom, by giving the rivers but one bank. By this arrangement, nothing was left to obstruct the view, as well of all the crustaceous and testaceous tribes that lie upon the pebbled beds of the clearer rivers, or wallow in the slime of the thicker, from the crab to the crocodile, as of all the finny tribes that divide the running waters of the transparent streams.

There were also representations of the sun and the moon, and of many stars, and of clouds, and rain, and sunshine, and a rainbow; and there were celestial beings, as well as terrestrial, as various in form as those of the ancient mythology. And neither Alexander nor the present Sovereign of Russia was forgotten.

Before we left this village, we heard, that not Russo-Siberians alone, but many of the men of the native tribes had come hundreds if not thousands of versts to see the wonders of this painted chamber, and to receive instruction from its gifted tenant.

The next morning a little farce which occurred, served to vary the ordinary monotony of the way. I was awakened about sun-rise by loud complaints of the merchant against our *yemstchik* whom he had discovered, by questioning him, was taking us the longer, by four or five hours, of two routes of which he had

had his choice, to attain the next village. After scolding for a time, the merchant proceeded to blows; but as they were in continental fashion, with the open hand, they were quite harmless, except in respect to their moral effect, upon which score the good peasant was not very sensitive. The man, indeed, made no sort of resistance, but complained merely of the hardship of his case, seeing that only a short time since, he had been beaten by a general for taking the shorter route. The general, he said, had found that road so full of ruts and obstacles to the passage of his carriage, that as soon as he discovered that there was another, he proceeded to the same mode of punishing him for not taking the road that he was now beaten for choosing.

About noon on the fifth day after we passed Tiumen, we arrived at the River Irtysch, the largest of all the tributaries, or more properly, of all the great branches of the mighty river of which the main stream is the Ob, which is the largest of all the rivers of the ancient continent, if not of the whole world. We found only a small hamlet at the ferry, inhabited by poor and apparently very lazy people, who seemed to be supported by transporting travellers and caravans across the river.

We had heard a great deal from the peasants living at a distance from any of the great rivers, of the famous fish, the *nelmare*, which is peculiar to the rivers of Siberia. But we had not yet tasted this fish, nor, indeed, seen it; and we had for many days determined, if possible, that we would dine upon it when we should reach this river. We were doomed, however, to be disappointed. The cottagers had neither fish, nor nets nor lines to procure them. Nor had they, indeed, even bread or any thing else to supply us with; so that now, for the first time for many days, we were thrown upon our own resources, which the plenty we had lately so generally found had caused us to neglect replenishing.

In answer to our inquiries about the *nelmare* here, we were told that they were so plentiful and so fine in this branch of the Ob, that they were often taken weighing as much as a quarter of a poud, or about nine English pounds, and that the price of one of these at Tobolsk, which lies upon this branch of the great river, was usually about forty copeks, or four pence English.

We found the colour of the waters of the Irtysch partaking of that of the soil upon its shores, which was similar to that of dirty pipe-clay.

The mighty stream which we had now to pass, was a noble object to contemplate, flowing on its silent course from the confines of China towards the Gulf of Obischer, at the distance of about three thousand miles from its source, finally to empty its waters into the Arctic Sea.

The left bank of the river, from which we were to embark, is level, without being low enough to subject the country to inundations; but the shores upon the opposite side are as high as those upon the right bank of the Volga at Nijhni Novgorod, and form steep cliffs. And while we were yet upon the left side of the river, our eyes were once more gratified with the view of a forest, extending up and down, upon the opposite shores, as far as the direction of the stream admitted the view.

The Irtysch appeared here to be something broader than the Rhine at Cologne; and as the craft in which we passed it was necessarily large, that it might accommodate horses and carriages, and as the wind was in the same direction as the current, we were between two and three hours in crossing, although the travellers aided the boatmen with all the exertions in their power, in the efforts they made to overcome the difficulties with which they had to contend.

We found the scene upon the right bank of the river

where we landed, refreshing in the extreme. From the time that we had crossed the mountains, though occasional groves of stunted birches and firs had a little tended to relieve the general monotony of the prospect throughout the steppe, we had seen nothing that resembled a forest, or even so much as a single fir tree, until our eyes eagerly rested upon this dark fir forest from the opposite side of the stream. A road that was cut through the bank of the river, to enable travellers to attain the table level which the land here assumed was steep. When we arrived at its summit, we found the wood composed of the several varieties of the fir tribes, mingled with a few birches, which were, however, very small. But as we proceeded, we observed pine trees towering at intervals above the inferior tribes of firs which covered the ground beneath, and in some instances large enough for the masts of moderate-sized vessels.

There is a great deal of difference in the manner in which this noble species of fir is found growing in Canada, as well as in the countries upon the Baltic Sea, where ships' masts are obtained, and in that in which it grows where it is more thinly sown among the inferior tribes. In the former cases its confinement leads to the very result required for the purposes of navigation, though at the sacrifice of half its beauty and half its claim to our admiration. There, its trunk shoots up a plain straight pole, upon which is set a bushy head, which serves but to show the unsightly disproportion between its spiry stem and its narrow branches. But here, unrestrained in its free course of growth, as was seen in this instance, the sovereign of the northern forest throws out its enormous branches much lower on the trunk; and, while it seems to shelter the trees of the inferior tribes beneath it, presents a picturesque and beautiful object for the eye to behold.

The welcome wood did not, however, extend above ten or twelve versts from the river's bank. After this, we passed through a country which had evidently been of the same character; but the original forest had been destroyed by the flames, and was succeeded by a poor stunted species of the white birch, rendered the more ugly to look upon by the presence of the old trunks of the pines that formerly flourished, standing wide apart, without a leaf to cover the nakedness of their gaunt and skeleton frames.

Before this day closed, we had left all traces of the noble wood far behind, and we were advancing into a country similar to that over which we had been travelling, with little exception, ever since we passed the mountains; and, weary from the fatigue which the difficulties that had attended our passage of the river occasioned, we all fell asleep.

CHAP. XVIII.

JOURNEY FROM EKATERINBURG TOWARDS TOMSK — *continued.*

Effects of external Causes upon our Visions at Night.— Magnificent Spectacle exhibited by the Hoar Frost on the Steppe at Sunrise.— A filthy Cottage.— Effects of the Advent of a young Pope in a Siberian Village.— Peculiar Method of crossing a River.— Improvement in the Face of the Country.— Geese.— Habits of these Birds.— Ruffians at a Village.— A new Fellow-traveller.— Accident to our Carriage.

At the close of the last chapter, the travellers were left sleeping; and, as their sleep and their awaking were accompanied on this occasion by circumstances which seemed to confirm some observations that I thought I had before been able to make, concerning the influence of external objects upon the character of our visions of the night, I shall here state both what I had on other occasions seemed to observe, and what we certainly now experienced. And if we reflect, that the greater part of the human race pass about one-third of their lives in sleep, it cannot but be admitted, that whatever may by possibility throw the smallest light upon the condition of the mind during that large portion of our existence, though it might only appear to aid us in making our slumbers as refreshing as possible, ought not to be passed over unnoticed by the least observant among us.

Many times after sleeping in the dark, I have remembered, upon awaking and recalling my dreams, that they had been full of indistinct visions, and very confused; and I have equally remembered upon awaking,

after sleeping where a little light only could reach the eye-lids, that every thing that the restless fancy had then presented, was more clearly seen, and also, that whatever the understanding had then striven to grapple with, had seemed to be more easily overcome: but I have remembered also, upon awaking, after sleeping in a glare of light, that my visions had been as indistinct, through the seeming excess of light in the false regions in which the imagination had been wandering, as they had seemed to be from the opposite cause, when sleeping in total darkness. Besides this, I have seemed to observe that the nights passed sleeping in the dim light, always excepting those which have succeeded excess, whether of indulgence or of fatigue of either mind or body, have been both physically and mentally more refreshing than those passed sleeping in the darkness, or in the full glare of lamps or of the day. Indeed, after a night of sound sleep and clear visions, I have often felt much the same relief from the tiresome monotony of every-day pursuits, that attends change from the town to the country, or from the country to the town. In this instance, however, not only did my own visions both of the night and of the morning, and their effects after awaking, afford a remarkable confirmation of the justness of the observations I had previously made, but I had the gratification to find that both my fellow-travellers, who were necessarily exposed to the influence of the same external circumstances, awoke after similar visions to those which my own fancy had presented, to feel the same mental and physical effects that myself experienced. Thus I shall, though in as few words as possible, report what myself, at least, seemed to see during the dim light of the moon and stars in the night, and upon the approach of the brighter light of the sun in the morning, and what I am sure I saw and felt after awaking.

During the proper hours of the night, I seemed, as I slept, to float upon another Irtysch, whose silent banks and pine forests appeared converted into the seats of music and song, which resounded through such groves as might be formed by the olive and the sycamore, and the palm and the pomegranate, and wanted only exemption from the change, that we cannot but remember must come, to equal one of those blissful regions which poets write of, but which travellers never find. Gradually, however, the soft and harmonious sounds that had prevailed, grew confused and harsh, and the fresh groves became so full of light, that the eye could not without pain regard them, until, with the effort to recover the placid state of body and mind which the light seemed to have disturbed, I awoke.

Upon now opening my eyes, I found a scene before them, which with the recollection of the state of the light before we fell asleep, confirmed the causes both of the agreeable and clear visions of the early portion of the night, and of the indistinct and confused scenes which succeeded them. The dim light of the moon and stars, which had shone through the first hours of our slumber, had passed away, and the full glare of day, as our faces were turned towards the east, was directly before us.

This morning was also among the more remarkable of those of our journey, on account of the magnificence of the spectacle which it presented to us. There was not a tree nor a shrub to be seen above the wastes of grass that appeared on all sides around, to make the least break in the uniformity of the plain. A hoar frost covered the whole surface of the ground; and although the sun, when we opened our eyes, had not yet appeared above the horizon, the sparkling element, which sat upon every blade of grass, reflected the rays of the beautiful Aurora from the silvery bed of the wide

plain. But as the sun approached the horizon, the face of the grassy steppe yet increased in splendour, and the scene in interest. As we cast our eyes around, without encountering a single object to obstruct the vision, it seemed as if we were gliding across an illuminated crystal plain. But as the bright orb began to appear above the line of the horizon, the chaste silvery scene gradually changed into golden hues, until the full reflection of his beams presented us with a spectacle too bright to behold. Even the dull professor was moved by this most touching exhibition of nature.

Long after the bright orb "had taken his last leave of the weeping morn," and the spangled carpet of the plain had disappeared, and the ground recovered its wonted green, the same unbroken horizon appeared around. The first object that we saw above the level of the plain, looked like a distant vessel, wending her way across the waste of waters within Neptune's domain. It was a single tree, that braved the solitude of the steppe, and, bent by the winter tempests, appeared to the eye of the travellers like a ship under canvass in a stiff gale.

It was already late in the forenoon before we arrived at the first village at which we were to change. The place consisted of a wretched collection of hovels, to which there appeared to be no cultivated land attached; and the inhabitants we learned chiefly lived, as in most of the villages of this class along the road, by supplying the caravans with horses. There seemed, indeed, to be much rivalry in this proper business of the place; for the peasant with whom we made our arrangements for horses, had galloped out to the distance of a verst, to meet us on our approach, and several others, a little less diligent, met us and offered their horses before we entered the village. When we drew up at the dwelling

of the peasant that was to supply our wants, we observed the neatest damsel at the door, of any that we had hitherto seen among this class of the people, which gave us more than common expectation of the comfort and the viands we might find within. But our disappointment was very great when we entered. We found ourselves, indeed, in the midst of so much filth, that we determined on refusing to take any thing, and were about to retire, when the damsel that had excited our hopes, came in, and now by her manners and dress so much attracted our curiosity concerning herself, as to induce us to delay our departure, and call at least for the *samovar*.

It seemed as if such an incongruity as was apparent between the neatness of this peasant girl and the filth of the dwelling, must have some reason that would interest us to hear. Thus, whilst our tea was preparing, and the maiden was now blowing up the fire to heat the *samovar* without doors, we engaged the rest within the house in a little chit-chat, which led to an explanation of the seeming anomaly.

Some observations have been already made upon the advantages enjoyed by the priests of the Russian Church, in being permitted to contract the most important of all the social ties, and some remarks also upon the moral effects of this canon of the Church put in comparison with the restraints of the Romish Church. The Russian priest or pope has indeed, in some instances, even a peculiar advantage, in the preference which his addresses receive above those of other men, on account of his incapacity, in case of the loss of his wife, to marry again, which the ladies judge, and no doubt with reason, will render him doubly careful of a possession which, if lost, he has it not in his power to replace. Now, it happened at this time that a young pope, of a Siberian family, had lately arrived at the

village from one of the universities of Russia, and wanted only the qualification of marriage to receive his ordination. Thus his advent had been an alarum to a rivalry among the maidens of the place, which had led to a study of dress and manners, of which we saw a sample in the person of the village belle before us. We did not, indeed, see any of the rivals of our fair young acquaintance; but we thought the pope would be fortunate if he selected the only aspirant we did see. Though full grown, she was not more than sixteen years of age. Her hair was neatly braided and parted in front, and she wore a gown of European manufacture; and although she had no stockings, she had shoes, and certainly town-made. Nature, too, to delicate features, had added a decidedly graceful person, and there was nothing in the slightest degree grotesque in the appearance of her dress, which must have been the effect of the same garments worn by any of those around her. And, as little reserve was shown by the inmates of the house in expressing to us, while the maiden was not present, their hopes at least, of having a pope in the family, we were not able to avoid, when she afterwards waited upon us, expressing our hopes also, of seeing her, when we might return, the aid and support of one who would have twice the interest of an ordinary husband in her preservation. This communication of our good wishes seemed, however, to take the maiden by surprise. The colour came in her cheeks, and she was full of confusion. But while this revealed her thoughts to us, it gave us the grateful assurance, that the spark of nature burns in the solitudes of Siberia as well as in the saloons where the belles and beaux of the European cities assemble.

There were the families of three generations in this house, which is quite a common circumstance in the country. But the contrast between the appearance of

the fair maid adorned for the conquest of a pope, and the sad condition of the rest of the women, was not greater than that between the filth of the piggery they inhabited, and the abundance of its larder. It was strange, indeed, to see such excess of uncleanness dwelling in company with plenty; to see naked children, like young pigs, wallowing among dirty straw and filth of their own making, where there were hanging great pieces of beef, both fresh and smoked, and cabbages and carrots in abundance. It seemed to indicate that the condition of the people was a part of their inherent character, and not to be changed without the presence of many more popes than have yet ventured to settle in this part of Siberia. Such, indeed, was our disgust at what we beheld, that we failed even in our attempt to refresh ourselves with some tea after it was made; and, fasting, we departed.

Early in the afternoon of this day, we passed a small river, which falls into the Irtysch at Omsk. The method by which we crossed its stream was novel to us. We first drove with our carriages directly into a large boat from the platform which united the road with the boat's gunwale. A rope which passed across the river, was then rove through a stancheon which rose about four feet above the deck of the boat; and, as soon as we were embarked, half a dozen hands began to tug at the rope; and they pulled lustily, until the boat, which advanced steadily, made her way to the opposite shore. The boat herself, too, was a curiosity. She was in form hexagonal, with the four side angles obtuse, and the angles at the extremities either right angles or slightly acute.

We saw several flocks of geese to-day, passing from the north towards the different lakes which were visible at short distances from the road, upon our right, in their annual migration at the approach of winter. Late

in the afternoon, we arrived at another village with such appetites as to disregard all niceness. And finding the rarely wanting *stchee* ready cooked, with the addition of some excellent rye bread, we made amends for the disappointment of the morning by a hearty meal.

The next day we breakfasted at the small district town of Kainsk. We made no stay here, however, owing to the same cause that had hitherto induced us to press on, — the advance of the season, and the probability of our being stopped by the heavy rains which usually precede the setting in of the winter, and render the roads impassable, until the frost is confirmed and the snow has fallen.

The country had now much changed its aspect. Broad lakes lay stretched out upon our right hand, grass of a finer quality than we had before observed, covered the ground, and groves of birches refreshed our sight, at almost regular intervals of three or four versts. The groves were set so perfectly distinct from one another, as to present the appearance of artificial plantations upon a grand scale. We seemed now, too, to be quite in the paradise of wild geese. We saw large flocks coming from the same quarter as those of the day before, alight on the lakes, and in several places we observed still greater numbers feeding, where the grass was shortest, in the intervals between the birch groves.

I had chanced to have opportunities before of observing the habits of the geese in North America, in the manner in which they provide for their security against any approaching enemy, whilst feeding, on their passage towards the south before the setting in of winter, and in a more particular manner still, when resting and sleeping, as they are wont to do, on the edge of the ice when it is breaking up, as they are proceeding north-

wards in the spring; and we had an occasion here of witnessing the same remarkable effects of the high order of instinct which these animals possess, in spite of our simile of a goose for a booby.

In the country above mentioned, I happened to reside where the windows of my apartment looked upon an open bay, which was frozen over during the winter. Here in the spring, as the weather broke, the current, which was rapid, always first opened a long channel, upon both sides of which the ice usually remained intact for several weeks. I have passed hours together here, watching with a telescope a number of geese sitting at the edge of the ice by the running stream, sometimes all sleeping with their heads under their wings, save two of the number, which always remained upon the watch. Their universal practice was to form a line, at each extremity of which, at about a dozen yards from the rest of the birds, stood one of the two geese that were watching, with his neck always erect. The flock would thus sit, sometimes basking in the sun or sleeping, for hours together, during which, while there was no cause of alarm, there would be hardly a motion perceptible among them, save at intervals of about half an hour, but sometimes more frequently, when the watchers were now relieved almost as methodically as the sentinels of the outposts of an army. When this took place, a single goose at each of the extremities of the line (whether called to his duty by the watcher before him or not, it was impossible to ascertain) roused himself, and marched to take his turn to watch, and was met always half-way by the sentinel he was about to replace. It was not possible to ascertain whether there were any particular watchers, or whether all the birds took their turn. But it was distinctly observable, that when there was any cause of alarm, such as a log or a branch of a tree

floating down the stream, the birds nearest the sentinels were the first that rose up, and were the first that slept again when the alarm seemed past. But when any thing appeared that was sufficiently alarming to put the whole to flight, the first that took to the wing was always near the centre of the line. I had also frequent opportunities when in the pursuit of the birds, and while floating down the stream in a canoe, painted white to imitate the ice, or covered with the branches of trees to look like those which the storms or floods frequently throw into the stream, to confirm the observations made from the shore.

The opportunity, however, did not on this journey admit of our making equally close observations concerning the habits of the Asiatic bird; but, as far as it did extend, it seemed to show them to be exactly the same as those of the American. The flocks of geese that we here saw feeding upon the grass, were indeed much more numerous than any that I had seen elsewhere. Sometimes, as far as we could make any estimate of their numbers, there appeared to be between 300 and 500 in a flock; whereas, in North America, there are not generally above a fifth or sixth of that number. But they seemed every where to form equally distinct societies; and, while they were feeding, they were formed in a long line, and appeared to have the same watchers at the ends as the American birds; and when, as was frequently the case, they had placed themselves between two of the woods which have been mentioned as standing at intervals in this part of the country, the extremities of the lines and the watchers were always towards the woods, as if from apprehension of the lurking wolves and foxes which there shelter themselves.

Every one who has been in any country where geese abound, must have observed, that when these birds are in flocks upon the wing, they never fly in an irregular

manner, but constantly form the figure of an acute angle, of which one of the sides is usually much longer than the other. If they are ever indeed seen flying in a straight line, this is only while a change is taking place, which causes the two extremities of their entire line alternately to form the long and the short side of the angle. The manner in which this is done, is by successively changing the leading bird upon the wing, which continually varies what we must call the apex of the angle in its relative distance to the two extremities of the whole line. In the flight of the Siberian bird, we observed the same order and changes as with the American, notwithstanding the enormous length of the lines.

We made one or two attempts to play the part of the wolf or fox, and thereby to provide ourselves with a meal of goose *stchee*, but were not able to get within the range of gun-shot of any of the birds we saw, without more art than time permitted us to practise.

Before noon, we stopped to take our *samovar* at a village called Kargatskaia. As we here observed a church, which had been partially painted, now undergoing repairs, and houses placed with a little more irregularity than usual, the place rather interested us; and we determined at least to pay a visit to the church before we resumed our journey. Our reception here, however, proved to be of too doubtful a character to encourage our putting our intentions into execution; and, as this was the first occasion upon which we met with the slightest inconvenience from the Siberians, it will be as well to relate what occurred in detail.

Our *yemstchik* had driven into the best house in the village; but as soon as our *tarantass* stopped, we found ourselves surrounded by the most ruffianly-look-

ing set of rascals we had seen since we entered the country. This, however, we did not much regard, and we alighted, leaving the *yemstchik* to look after the property in the vehicle, while we entered the peasant's house, not the least doubting that whatever the people of the village might be, sufficient force would be at hand to render open plunder by day, at any rate very improbable.

We were now introduced, and for the first time since we entered the country, into a papered room with a glazed floor, where we seated ourselves to take a little tranquil repose. But while we were over our *samovar*, a fellow dressed in European costume, but in clothes not very new or clean, came to ask us to permit him to make a seat behind our *tarantass*, across the projecting ends of the poles upon which the vehicle was swung, and to accompany us, for the purpose of retracing his steps upon the road by which he had just arrived with a caravan. He had, he stated, left at a village at the distance of thirty or forty versts from that where we now met, not only his pocket book and twenty rubles, but what was of much more importance, his passport, without which he could not proceed any further in the direction in which he was travelling.

Whether to grant this request or not, of course required some consideration. But the man had scarce made it, before our *yemstchik* came in to say, that he strongly recommended our making no delay, as the village was full of vagabonds and rascals from the mines, and that the people of the place were themselves but little better, and there being at present neither police nor *zasidytelle* (petty magistrate) here, it was not safe to remain any longer.

The merchant now began to be anxious about his property in the *tarantass*, which consisted of a box of jewellery purchased at Nijhni Novgorod, and which, as

he stated, was of great value, which induced us to determine upon making no further delay.

When we came out to proceed, we found an augmentation of lookers on; and one or two among them exhibited a disposition to quarrel with us, by uttering expressions of contempt for foreigners.

We, however, now decided at once upon accommodating the stranger like ourselves in the place, for the sake of increasing our force, while we were in such a bad neighbourhood; and the man was soon busily employed in preparing to place himself. We had alighted, without any arms about our persons; but now finding matters wearing this air, we took an occasion before seating ourselves in the *tarantass*, of exhibiting all the weapons we had; and with which, it will be remembered, we were not niggardly provided.

As soon as our new fellow-traveller had arranged his seat, we mounted our vehicle, and drove off; but not without some further ill-language being addressed to us by some of the ruffians.

We found the road, as we left this village, unusually level and good, and the country exhibiting more than its wonted portion of wood. But we were not above two versts upon our journey, before an accident happened to our *tarantass*, and of a character which we thought, after the roads over which we had passed upon the other side of the mountains without any damage, a perfect mystery. We were not even going at an extraordinary pace, when suddenly the axle-tree snapped in the manner it might have done, had the vehicle unexpectedly encountered some direct obstruction to its course. We happened to have every thing with us, however, by way of tools to repair the damage, and, fortunately, in a grove of trees that was near at hand, there were plenty of young birches, which supplied us with the very wood we wanted; so that,

while my fellow-travellers and myself occupied ourselves in disengaging the broken axle from the carriage, our *yemstchik* entered the wood with an axe; and, before we had accomplished our part of the necessary labour, he had felled a tree and moulded a new axle, which he now brought us, nearly ready to receive the iron to attach it to the wheels of the *tarantass*.

During our detention, we were under some expectation of the appearance of some of the ruffians we had left at the village; but we saw no one, and we were soon again on our way.

After trotting on, however, for another verst or two, we found more friction taking place, in consequence of the roughness of our new axletree, than it seemed safe to permit to continue; we therefore caused the vehicle to be stopped; and upon our now alighting to make some provision against this inconvenience, we were surprised to find that our new companion had disappeared. The first thing that suggested itself, was of course, that some accident had deprived us of our recruit for the nonce; but, upon summing up, and balancing all the probabilities arising out of the several circumstances attending our acquaintance with the fellow, we had no doubt that he was leagued with the rogues of the village where we found him, and that he had broken the axletree by means of the poles upon which we were swinging, to allow his friends to come up with us, to effect a concerted scheme of robbery; but that the attempt had failed on account of his companions being deterred from following, by the rather formidable display that we had been able to make of our defensive weapons: and we were subsequently confirmed in this opinion, by accounts we heard of several robberies of detachments of caravans passing through this part of the country. It is here, however, proper to say, that these depredations in Siberia are

not committed by any of the aborigines, or even by the descendants of the earlier exiles, but by the adventurers and criminals from Russia, who have of late years increased in proportion to the increase of the production of the precious metals in the country.

This occurrence was at least a good lesson to us; and trusting we should profit by it we drove merrily on. We dined in the evening at the village of Novozemka.

CHAP. XIX.

JOURNEY FROM IKATERINBURG TOWARDS TOMSK — *continued.*

Accident to our Carriage.—Striking Aspect of the Steppe.—Compared to the Ocean.—Impression made on the Traveller.—Companions of the winged Species.— Change of Weather.— Scarcity of Horses.— Spoiled Roads.— Difficulties of the Way.—Repairs to our Carriage.—Filthiness of the Peasants.—Rivalry among the Travellers.— Inconvenience occasioned by the Dogs.— Canine Societies.— Gardens.— Stubble Land.— Agrarian Freedom.— Wolves.—The Games and the Character of the Village Boys.

THE sun rose, after we awoke the next morning, over the desert plain, with his accustomed brilliancy. The road was still good, and we were proceeding at a rapid pace, when an accident happened to one of the wheels of our vehicle, which, as we were out of the reach of any aid, detained us some time. Fortunately, however, our present *yemstchik* was as good a mechanic as the last; and the wheel was immediately taken off, and the repairs were commenced. In the meantime, as I found I was not able on this occasion to lend any effectual aid in the work, I walked forward to enjoy for once, alone, the freshness and beauty of the autumnal morning.

There was nothing in the prospect around, that varied from that which constantly presented itself to us at the same hour. Nothing was to be seen but the silvery plain, and the red, grey, and blue of the different quarters of the heavens, all blending their colours insensibly with one another, without a cloud or fleeting rack to break the harmony of the view, or a breath of air to disturb the silence that reigned. A mariner would have been reminded of the scene which the ocean

sometimes displays, when not the smallest ripple appears upon the surface of the water to arrest the reflection of the sun's brilliant rays, and not a cloud is seen in the sky. It reminded me of a calm I once experienced within the tropics, when all on board our bark watched anxiously for days for the first "cat's paw," to give us hopes of a breeze.

In both these positions, almost equally, the isolation to which we are exposed seems to leave the mind free to contemplate calmly the two greatest wonders that the creation displays, with more advantage than when we are surrounded by many objects that distract our thoughts or engage our attention—the great globe upon which we tread, and the far greater by which it is enlightened and fertilized. As we walk over the plain, or as we float upon the ocean, when no object breaks the evenness of the curve line of the horizon, the magnitude, the form, and the solidity of the globe which we inhabit, by the less familiar aspect in which they are now seen, than that in which we are accustomed to behold them, doubly impress us with their reality. Nay, often when the sun is rising or setting, whether the horizon which he is approaching or leaving be formed by the ocean or the plain, if we will forget for a moment, the ideas we attach to our familiar expression of the rising and setting sun, and think only of our true relation to the bright orb, and of our rotatory motion, now bringing and now closing the day, we shall seem to observe more plainly the real character of our movement, and almost perceive the onward motion of the waters upon which we float, or of the firm ground upon which we tread.

With such scenes as these before our eyes, the coldest must feel what the poet alone can express. But nothing, perhaps, in a similar position, is more striking than the contrast we are insensibly led to draw, between

the durability of the grander objects of nature before our eyes, and the limited existence of the sentient being that is permitted to contemplate them.

During the morning, we passed another stream in the same manner that we crossed that of the preceding day.

Later in the day, we passed through a country abounding in morass land, and producing coarse high grass in greater quantities than usual. In several places we saw large herds of cattle and flocks of fat-tailed sheep, under the watch of Kirgeeze shepherds. The villages were, however, from twenty to five and twenty versts apart, and the way was unrelieved by any variety in the scene, and more wearisome than ordinary.

I have not yet mentioned the relief which we sometimes found in the dreariest part of the road, from the frequent presence of some of the winged tribes, which are indebted to the capriciousness of the taste, rather than to the humanity of the carnivorous biped man for their civil treatment and their security, where those of a more delicate species would find us no better than wolves in the work of destruction, as well as in appetite to devour what we destroy. Up to this time, we had had the frequent company upon the road of the party-coloured crow, with white body and black head and wings, and sometimes the visits of the magpie, both which birds were as tame as those that must have been seen in the streets of Moscow, by every one who has been in that city. But now the visits of the crow began to be more rare, and those of the magpie more frequent, as if the latter deemed the position of travellers in this part of the country required more of his chattering, to relieve the weariness of the monotonous steppe. This circumstance has been thought worthy of remark, if it were only to show the paucity we found of objects worth taking note of during a great portion of our journey.

Many times when we had gazed for hours upon the unbroken horizon and the even plain, and had nothing novel to expect at the next village at which we were to arrive, the presence of a single bird, as it sometimes happens to the mariner, was as welcome as the return of a friend after long absence.

We had much trouble with the wheels of our carriage during the whole of this day, and our progress was consequently slower than usual. This, indeed, was the cause of some little anxiety to us, as the sky about noon began to exhibit the first symptoms of a change of weather, that had appeared during our journey. Moreover, as the day advanced, a cold wind began to blow from the north-west, and all the ill consequences which could not fail to come in the train of our dreaded enemy the rain, were now imminent.

The threatening signs were not deceptive; and when we alighted at a small village, which we reached immediately before dark, it was raining, with the thermometer at four degrees of heat of Réaumur, and it soon became exceedingly dark. Darkness was, indeed, as great a novelty to us as the rain; for, even when the moon was not above the horizon, we had hitherto received light enough from the stars alone, to travel at all hours, without inconvenience, at full speed.

The peasant at whose house we had stopped as the most likely to supply our wants, had no horses; but while we were engaged over our tea, the *yemstchik* went in search of any he might find in the village. In the meantime, doubts arose whether it were prudent to proceed or halt, at least until the moon, which would rise late in the night, made her appearance. To the inconveniences we were certain of experiencing from the darkness of the night and the wet, we had to add the probabilities of others; for we learned here, that the roads in this part of the country were not so secure

as those, generally, that we had hitherto travelled, on account of the number of the labourers from the mines, who were passing homewards at this season; and that only two or three days ago, several waggons, laden with goods from Nijhni Novgorod, had been despoiled by some of these ruffians upon the very stage which we were about to commence. Nevertheless, the loss of a night at this time might, should the rains properly set in, involve the loss of a fortnight; and as to the robbers, we thought a German, a Frenchman, and an Englishman, ought not to regard tales which, whenever they treat of evils, as we had all travelled far enough to know, are sure to be full of exaggeration? The merchant, however, whose risk was the greatest, whether we encountered robbers, or were seriously delayed, was desired to decide whether we should go or stop. But with all these causes of hesitation, my long fellow-traveller found it difficult to determine. While however we were still drinking our Chinese beverage, suddenly the *yemstchik* entered to inform us that the horses had arrived; and thus the question, as happens sometimes with more important matters, was decided by an occurrence which had no relation to it; and we mounted our *tarantass* and proceeded.

The darkness of the first part of the night, and the mud which we now encountered, and which reached, in particular spots, even up to the horses' knees, caused our progress to be slow. We made, however, two stages during the night, and arrived at a small village soon after sun-rise, without encountering any of the lawless tribe, which, prepared as we were, and out of humour with the weather, the long constancy of which had quite spoiled us, we almost wished might happen, for the sake of some novel adventure.

Here, for the first time, we found a scarcity of horses. This was occasioned by a detachment of a caravan that

had passed by, requiring additional strength to meet the state of the roads, which, we heard, were almost impassable further eastward, on account of rain having fallen in that direction for several days.

After an hour or two's delay, however, we contrived to obtain eight horses, or five more than our ordinary number; and with these we set forward again with all convenient expedition; and it was not long before we found we had had good cause for the precaution we had taken. Nevertheless, the mud, which filled pits upon the road as deep as to the horses' chests, and worse swamps, that occasionally lay across our path, so much delayed us, that it was near mid-day before we reached another village.

We fared at this stage, however, in a manner that made some amends for the weariness which the state of the roads had occasioned us during the first part of the day. Some *stchee* was ready, and was immediately served; and, with the addition of tea and black bread, all of which our good appetites caused to appear more excellent than usual, we made such a hearty meal, as to content even the professor, who, though he had rarely any thing good or bad to say on such occasions, for once declared, that he had dined "*en prince.*"

The rest of the day, and the night which followed, were passed in the same manner as those which preceded them, in making all the efforts in our power, with a continual augmentation of the number of our horses, to obtain the greatest speed possible. Sometimes we were wallowing in the mud, and sometimes galloping over the better portions of the road with unusual speed, to make up for the loss of time which the pits and swamps had occasioned us.

On the twenty-first, we arrived early in the day at the village of Kroutié Laga, with one of our wheels in such a shattered condition that we determined to remain

here until we could get it put into such a state of repair, as would afford us at least a prospect of completing our journey before its entire destruction, which might not only detain us until the snow should fall, but, perhaps, until the great River Ob, the main stream of which we had still to cross, should be frozen over. Fortunately, however, we found a blacksmith here, who had his forge about half a verst out of the village; and in our disabled state, we put our damaged vehicle into his hands, with a *carte blanche* to obtain all the aid of all sorts that he thought proper, just as a sick man who, finding his own endeavours fail in restoring his health, gives himself up to his physician, and all the aids he may think proper to employ. After this, as it was raining, we resolved to take shelter in the house from which we were to be supplied with horses, in trusting at the same time, that we should find at least something to satisfy the most pressing necessities of nature.

Upon entering this house, we found a yet filthier sty than any we had hitherto seen. But as the rain, which was now falling in torrents, rendered the shelter of its roof necessary, there seemed no retreat, and we took our places, as we were wont to do, upon the benches in the holy corner, if it be not profane to apply such a term to any portion of the very dwelling of uncleanness. It was at least the furthest removed from the worst of the filth with which the room abounded. We even asked for the *samovar*, in hopes that we might at any rate take some tea. And as the heat of the room and the odour together were almost insupportable, we opened two little windows that were near the corner we had chosen, and determined to bear patiently what we saw no means of avoiding.

Three travellers, especially when of three different countries, might be often placed in a position which

would beget among them an honourable rivalry, and every one singly might be ambitious of showing the other two that he could best brave danger or endure fatigue, and the cause of their emulation might be very legitimate and worthy of praise. But as we sat together in the corner of this room, and breathed the foul air, and looked upon our own species of all ages, and, as in the other instance, of three generations, confounded with uncleanly animals and amidst vermin, and then looked at one another, it seemed as if the point of honour were reversed; for the question was plainly, which could bear longest and with the least complaint, the degradation that none in such a situation could fail to suffer. Nevertheless, we all stoutly braved it out, until an act of one of the children, too disgusting to describe, started us up together; and we ran to the door, and were determined to take up our quarters among the cattle in the open shed, rather than re-enter this kennel of uncleanness. Happily, however, the rain had now ceased. We therefore first directed our steps toward the forge; and as we here found the smith very busy, and every thing there going on well, instead of entering another hut, we turned in the opposite direction to explore the village.

The village of Kroutié Laga appeared to be larger than the greater part of the villages we had previously seen. It consisted, like nearly all those that we had passed by on both sides of the Ural Mountains, of two rows of houses, placed far apart from one another, with generally enclosed premises between them, and ranged on either side along a broad road. We heard before we left, that it was three, but it was certainly two, versts in length. The day happened to be Sunday, and our first inquiry was for the church. Here we thought we might at least see the people at their prayers, washed or unwashed, without the risk of encountering any thing disgusting. But although the village was larger, and

contained a greater population than many in which we had found churches, it had no holy edifice of any kind, and no resident pope. We, therefore, lounged down the chief thoroughfare, to see whatever else might chance to attract our attention.

It has not yet been mentioned, that ever since we entered Siberia, wherever we stopped, we were assailed and much annoyed by the fierce dogs with which the villages abound, and which rendered it absolutely necessary for us to have our pistols constantly in hand. This was, however, only a precaution against any real danger from these savage animals, by whom strangers have been frequently severely torn; for the law of Russia forbids the discharge of fire-arms, alike in the villages and the towns, and it would have been highly imprudent in us to place ourselves in a position which might have subjected us to the censure of the *zasidytelle*, or have involved us in a dispute with the inhabitants of the village, without the last necessity. Indeed, until this time, threats and the sight of our fire-arms had been sufficient to keep our petty tormentors at a becoming distance, and we bore their snarlings and growlings with patience. But here they were more vicious, or more courageous than usual, and they beset us quite in a body. Nevertheless, the professor, the most prudent of the party, and the best acquainted with the inconveniences that might attend any infraction of the laws of the country, very properly restrained our desire of vengeance, until one of the fiercest of the dogs seized my *schouba*, at the moment that a half-dozen others were ready to second this audacious disregard of human dignity and fire-arms, when, of necessity, I made him a present of the contents of one of my pistols.

I will here mention, also, while speaking of the Siberian dogs, that on another occasion, when quite

unprepared, I was knocked down by one of these large and fierce animals, whose kennel I had approached without hearing or seeing him, until he sprang with his fore-paws against my breast, but without having, fortunately, length of chain enough to effect the further mischief he doubtless intended.

The dog on the present occasion was only wounded; and as he fled, his howling was the signal of an attack of two or three of the other dogs upon himself, which brought on a general canine combat, that led to our obtaining from the peasants that were by, a little account of the social habits of the dogs of at least this particular part of the country.

It appeared, that the dogs here were divided, according to the sections of the village, into societies, which, like those of men, had their periods of peace and war, and that the most frequent cause of their wars, like that of the wars of the "proud biped" whom they were born to obey, yet might not always with advantage imitate, was the trespass of some of the members of one society upon the territories of another, which seldom failed to bring on a general engagement, that often terminated in the death of a hero or two of one party or the other.

It happened on this occasion, that at the moment the boldest of the party that had assailed us, was wounded, although arrayed against the general enemy, his party had passed the bounds that separated them from their nearest neighbours, and the attack upon the wounded dog was but the signal for a grand canine combat. Their strife on this occasion was, however, short; for the peasants now set upon both parties with sticks and staves, and like an umpire army drove each of the belligerents within his own territory: and the only blood that was shed, was of our own spilling.

We did not enter any second house; but we passed

into several of the spacious courts between them, where the peasants were occupied with affairs appertaining to the little husbandry that seemed to be practised among them. We observed that the men were well-dressed, in sheep-skins, and wore boots made of untanned leather and well adapted to tramp in the mud which abounded in their yards, and had fur caps on their heads. But all the women that we saw, whether at work, or at their doors, were bare-footed and had nothing but a chemise, with a short woollen skirt, on their bodies, and a handkerchief about their heads, although the thermometer was now only one degree above the freezing point.

In some instances, where we happened to see more than the ordinary appearance of industry about the houses, we passed across the courts to the cultivated ground behind them. There were no enclosures, except for a few small gardens, in which we observed some cabbages still growing, and so large as to indicate the same richness in the soil which we had hitherto every where found. There were, however, some patches of ploughed land, upon which we saw the stubble of rye and oat crops remaining. We made some inquiries of some peasants that had accompanied us, concerning their agrarian rights; and we learned that the age among them had not yet arrived when such restraints as attend a definition of particular rights respecting property in land become necessary, and that every one took, cultivated and abandoned at any time the ground that best suited his purpose or his whims.

Some few sheep were grazing around, which, though protected by the dogs during the day, were not here safe from the wolves after dark. Hence they are then driven into the courts, within which the wolves are not able to penetrate without disturbing both dogs and men. The loss of the sheep generally arises from neglect

in the evening, or from the absence of the dogs during the day. We heard that dogs were not unfrequently killed by the wolves when defending the sheep, yet that they were oftener vanquishers even in single combat. Engagements between the two species, however, are not frequent. The dogs bark as soon as they discover the wolves, and the wolves know that a still greater enemy to their species is at hand, and slink away. Nevertheless, we heard that, owing to the natural carelessness of the peasants, and the greater cunning of the wolves above that of the dogs, especially where fire-arms, as is the case in most of the villages, are scarce, or the permission to use them rather difficult to obtain, there are a great many sheep, in proportion to the numbers kept, taken off by the wily prowler; as, indeed, we might very well have judged from the frequent instances of his approach to the villages while we were taking our tea in the evening at the peasants' houses.

Our morning's adventures were rather humorously closed. In one of the larger and drier spaces between the houses, we found all the boys of the village assembled and playing at hockey, or a game that nearly resembled the English school-sport known by that name; and, as we were greeted on our appearance by half a dozen of the elder of them with positive politeness, and invited to share in their sport, we did not hesitate a moment to choose the sides we would take; and, putting down a few *copeks* for the stakes, we joined heartily in the juvenile diversion.

The game went merrily on. Our *copeks* and the honour the boys evidently thought we did them, contributed wonderfully to stimulate the energy of their best players. Many of them were but half clothed; but a finer set of youngsters I have rarely seen. When we were at rest between the games, they gathered around us, and asked many questions. One of the elder, upon

whose brow "was writ intelligence," after asking the question that generally to strangers coming from the capitals to any part of the Russian empire precedes every other, "Have you seen the Emperor?" made some very apposite remarks. He inquired of the professor, whose perfect knowledge of the Russian language naturally led to the supposition that he was a good subject of the Czar, where we, his companions, came from; and being told that we were subjects of other sovereigns, he asked where our countries were, and whether we were Christians or not. Moscow and Tomsk were, however, the only two places about which this boy's curiosity seemed to have been much excited. Of the former, he inquired the number of its inhabitants, churches, forts, walls, gates, and palaces, and he told us all he had heard of Tomsk. All the rest of the boys listened attentively to what passed, and several others among them, who seemed scarcely less remarkable for their intelligence, put other questions, which impressed us generally with a high opinion of the native quickness of the youths of the country; and we regretted that school-masters and artizans were not more liberally distributed among a race that seemed by nature so capable of receiving instruction.

CHAP. XX.

JOURNEY FROM IKATERINBURG TO TOMSK —*continued.*

Departure from the Village of Kroutié Laga.—Arrival at the Banks of the Ob.—Delay.—Comfortable Quarters.—The Ob.—Wild Fowl.—Lakes.—Birds.—Duck shot —The Ferry of the Ob.—Laden Waggons.—Passage across.—Woody Banks.—Remains of ancient Forests.—Elevated Land-view.—Condition of the Village of Oiashinskaia.—A Governor travelling.—A cunning Peasant.—The Reward of Patience of Injuries.—Aspect of the Country.—Rich Soil.—Forests.—Undulated Country.—Views.—Tatar Village.—Tatar Merchant's Family.—Rural Affairs.—Cleanliness.—Morals.—Hospitality.—Tatar Villages.—River Tom.—Peculiarity of the Rivers of the old Continent.—Fortunate Discovery.—Passage of the River.—Aspect of Tomsk.—Arrival.

We left the village of Kroutié Laga early in the afternoon, with our carriage, as we trusted, now in a condition to carry us to the end of our journey; and after another night's tedious travelling, during which we changed without alighting at the village of Tirishkina and the small district town of Kolivan, we arrived at the village of Orskoi Bor, upon the immediate banks of the grand branch of the Ob, which bears the proper name of the river: and here we were for a short time delayed, in consequence of further damage to our disabled vehicle, which it was absolutely necessary to repair.

Although we had attained the banks of the Ob, we were still about five versts from the ferry at which we were to cross the stream. But as this was the station at which travellers repose, when the passage of the river is obstructed by the making or the breaking up

of the ice in the autumn or spring, we found a forge, and no want of mechanics, and very good fare, and a clean and comfortable apartment to sit down in to take our meal.

With the exception of the house of the old soldier with its painted chamber, we had not entered a clean apartment since we left Tiumen, and a very few that might be termed exclusively *human* dwellings. We now, too, indulged our good appetites with minds more at ease than usual, partly on account of the comfort of our quarters compared with those to which we had been accustomed, but also because we had gained the banks of the great river, and thus secured our crossing before the ice began to form, from which we had dreaded a long detention. Even the professor seemed now to be awaking from the bear-like slumber in which he had, save at intervals, indulged during the journey thus far. And while the merchant attended to the repairs of the *tarantass*, the Frenchman and myself took a walk along the banks of the river.

The breadth of the stream here appeared to be about double that of the Rhine at Cologne. Its banks were high on both sides, and thickly sown with birch trees of a superior growth to those we had with few exceptions seen since we entered the country. Upon its bosom floated thousands of wild fowl, which we might approach within pistol shot without disturbing; but as there was no canoe at the shore, and we had no dog, we could not have got what we might have shot, and therefore made no attempt wantonly to destroy them. Among them, we noticed the commonly called black-duck, the widgeon, and the sheldrick or diver.

When the repairs of our vehicle were completed, we left the banks of the Ob again, to cross a narrow alluvial plain formed by the serpentine course of the stream. In the midst of this plain, there were several

lakes, near which the road passed, quite covered with wild fowl of the several species which we had seen upon the river. Hundreds were feeding also upon the morass around the lakes. Some were even in company with our constant companions the magpies, which were here more plentiful than ever. We stopped but to make a single discharge of a fowling-piece, which however furnished us with a good dinner for the next day. The report of the piece seemed to disturb only those that were within a few hundred yards of us; but even as these rose chiefly from the water, and in a dense mass, the noise of their wings over the silent wastes of the plain, was like the sound of distant thunder.

We arrived at the ferry of the Ob about two hours before dark; but as several laden carriages from Nijhni Novgorod, on their way to some distant part of the country, had preceded us, and the ferry-boat was on the opposite side of the river, we were not able to embark before an hour after dark.

The night was calm and fine; but such was the strength of the current, that our crossing occupied us half the night. This however is not longer than the average time in which the passage is made; for, unless there happens to be a strong wind against the stream at the time, the boat is commonly carried so far down the river, that upon reaching the opposite shore, she has to be tracked up often for several versts by the united force of the crew, who land for that purpose. To ourselves, however, this delay brought relief. We had not at any time, since we left Ikaterinburg, had an opportunity of sleeping when the carriage was not in motion upon the road, and knowing how long we should be on this occasion without apparent movement, we made ourselves as comfortable as possible in our *tarantass;* and we all slept soundly till the moment the carriage itself again touched the shore.

We found the right bank of the Ob resemble that of the Irtysch. The moon was shining as we ascended the little elevation which led to the table surface of the land; and the dark forests here afforded us the same agreeable relief, that we had experienced from the view of those of the Irtysch after the tiresome sameness of the grassy plain. The wood was, however, here more varied, and the pine more scantily sown among the darker spruces; and the birches were of inferior growth to those upon the corresponding bank of the Irtysch. We found the country too, as we proceeded, slightly undulated.

As we removed from the vicinity of the river, we observed less and less wood; and by the time the day was approaching, we had left the fir forest far behind us, and the country was now partially covered with stunted birches alone. Among these, however, stood the tall trunks of decayed pines, plainly indicating, as in the vicinity of the Irtysch, that the birches were a "second growth," which had succeeded an ancient forest, in which the pine had attained to a size much larger than any we had before seen in Siberia.

Though there had been much rain here, and we found the ground very wet, we met now no obstruction to our ancient rate of travelling; and, as the sun rose with his accustomed unclouded brilliancy, we were full of hope of completing our journey before a late hour the next day. The prospect indeed before us, after the tranquil sleep we had enjoyed during the early part of the night, the return of better weather, and the professor's hopes of champagne, filled us all with the most agreeable anticipations.

Before the sun was two hours high, we obtained from an elevated spot, a view of the village of Oiashinskaia in a valley, and in the midst of a country somewhat more varied in aspect than any we had for a long time seen.

The *yemstchik* had already expressed apprehensions, however, of the difficulties of the road which we had yet to encounter. And when we approached this village, we found ourselves plunged into a bed of stiff mud, through which our horses were unable to draw us, and over which it would have been impossible for us to pass on foot. Some peasants, however, came to our aid; and three or four fresh horses now laboured with our own for a full half-hour before we were enabled to alight at the house of the peasant who had furnished them.

Our first care, as soon as we got out of this complete bog, was about horses to proceed with. Notwithstanding the wretched appearance of the place, we procured eight; and, satisfied with what was far above our utmost expectations upon first seeing the village, we called for the *samovar*, and determined to take our breakfast very leisurely. Our grand object of passing the Ob was accomplished, and we saw no further important obstruction to the remaining portion of our way, and we were not now disposed to suffer any trifling inconveniences to trouble us.

While, however, we were seated, free from care, over our tea, the unpleasant news was brought us, that the civil Governor of Eastern Siberia had unexpectedly arrived, on his way to the seat of his government, Irkutsk, and that his attendants, finding a scarcity of horses, had very unceremoniously seized upon six of the eight we had engaged; and as the professor, our guide and counsellor in all difficulties that regarded the laws and usages of the country, recommended our taking no notice of a proceeding so strange to those less acquainted with the customs existing among this people, we determined to consider ourselves only unfortunate, and bear with patience what we could not remedy. Moreover, the peasant to whom the horses

belonged encouraged us to expect the return of some others that were now upon a journey, at least before night; yet we had little hope that they would be in a condition to set out again, even during all the following day, after the reports we heard of the muddy condition of the roads in the direction from which they were coming. We had some idea, indeed, in the midst of our resignation, of going to the governor, who, we thought, might chance to know nothing of the conduct of his servants, to endeavour to get him, if possible, to share with us all the horses that were to be obtained, in something like a just proportion to the wants of both parties. But his excellency was at the opposite end of the village; and the passage to and fro, without more horses than we now had, was next to impossible; and our prudent adviser still feared, that if we did reach the house at which the governor was breakfasting, in case of ill success, we might get out of temper, and do ourselves more mischief than any we could receive from the becoming patience which he recommended; so we remained uncomplainingly resigned.

We had at least an example of this happy disposition in the patient and ready servants of man, that had brought us so far, and had endured so much; and we kept our seats upon the benches in the corner of the peasant's room, without a hope of being able to quit this miry vale for at least that day.

We had not, however, sulked away an hour, before a peasant arrived, to say that there were now all the horses we wanted at our service, and the very best in the village, and quite fresh, with which we might proceed. This knowing fellow, it appeared, had outwitted the attendants of the governor. He had timely heard of his excellency's approach to the village, which had been some time expected, with three equipages, and he knew very well that all the horses that could be

obtained would be required for the representative of the sovereign to dash through the mud at a pace that would become a man of high rank, and, not caring to expose his horses to such usage, especially for a gage inferior to that which he would receive from the foreigners, he had hid away his best beasts, and had paraded out such as were unfit for the journey, with the air of a loyal subject most forward to aid his sovereign's high officer on his tiresome way.

"I love the Emperor," said the man, with whom we had now some joking about the manner in which he had outwitted the governor's attendants; "but I like my horses better than any of his officers, and I will not risk the loss of them, when a little management may save them."

Thus, our patience had turned our chagrin to real triumph; for we had never better horses than those that were now put into our *tarantass;* and we had the, doubtless pardonable, satisfaction of passing the governor and his retinue, wallowing in the mud within five versts of the village in which we had been left apparently so helpless. It is proper here, however, to say, that our horses not being again seized on this occasion, was a sufficient proof that the governor himself had no share in the piracy.

We dined to-day at a village of the better class named Bolotna. The ground as we proceeded, continued to be slightly undulated, and whether high or low, exhibited the same rich soil of fine black mould, which, except at short intervals, we had observed every where abound since we crossed the mountains. The land was here, indeed, blacker than ever; and the vegetation was unusually abundant. For many versts, the country was covered with such birches as we had so frequently observed of "the second growth," among which were still standing many of the tall and bare

trunks of an ancient forest of pines and other firs, upon which traces of the fire were visible. Those that had flourished here, indeed, had evidently been of a still finer growth than any of which we had before seen the remains, and well attested that the natural capabilities of the land were equal to the production of any thing that the latitude and distance from the ocean might admit.

When we awoke upon the morning of the 24th, we were ascending a hill, and the day was just breaking. As we gained the highest elevation of the ground, the sun was rising directly before us in the same unclouded majesty that, with so few exceptions, we had been accustomed to behold his welcome beams at every return of day. A vast country, and fair to the eye so long fixed upon the scanty vegetation around, or the desert plains, now lay spread out for miles before us in wild grass lands slightly undulated, and partially covered with the darker species of fir. In the midst of the landscape, at intervals, appeared portions of the River Tom, bright with the rays of the sun, and wending its serpentine way through the light-green plains, and the sombre groves which generally covered the more elevated portions of the landscape.

As we descended from this hill, we found the country producing generally stunted firs, thinly sown. There were, however, some groves of birch trees; but these at this season, when their leaves have fallen, do not modify the deeper shades of the fir forest, as in the months of their bloom.

We breakfasted to-day at an early hour at Voruchina: and about mid-day, we arrived at the village of Kaltaiskaia. Kaltaiskaia is a Tatar village, and inhabited almost exclusively by peasants of this race; and we heard from our *yemstchik*, that there was a Tatar merchant residing here, who was always ready

to receive strangers, and who would supply us with horses or obtain them for us, but that the rest of the inhabitants of the village were rather shy with Christians, for want of the habit of mixing among them. We therefore determined to drive up to the dwelling of the good Mussulman merchant.

The houses of the village were differently arranged from those of all the villages we had visited, inhabited by Siberians of Russian descent. They neither stood in a row, nor were placed near each other, but were distributed about the cultivated fields, which we observed were fenced with poles, and in some instances covered with the stubble of rye, barley, and oats. There was a small mesque in the midst of them, prettily situated and painted, and forming an ornament and finish to the village; and we heard that there were also two others; but they were either removed from the centre part of the village, or were not distinguishable, like that which we saw, by the minaret. The whole formed a fair example of the superiority of the Tatar peasant, in sobriety and diligence, over the Russo-Siberian, at least wherever the latter is deprived of the spirit upon which society exists among his race, which is, his religion, and left without a guide to direct his steps, or a model before him to imitate, as it is his fate to be in many of the lone districts of Siberia.

Every thing here indicated such capabilities in the country, as the persevering industry of our North Britons, formed in a colony under their pastors, would in half a century bring to a degree of culture not yet thought of by its present inhabitants.

As we drove up to the Mussulman's house, which was a neat dwelling, placed within a court and a little aside from the road, a smart-looking lass of ten or twelve years of age came out, with her face half-

covered, and though evidently too much pleased to see strangers to have any inclination to retreat, Moslem like, took no notice of our *yemstchik's* demand, if indeed she understood it, whether the good man of the house was at home. The merchant, however, made his appearance before we had time to alight. He was dressed in a similar style to the richer sort of the Arabs of Syria; and with more taste or exactness than the greater part of the Tatars we saw at Kazan, or in any of the villages of Russia. After him, came out three or four children of both sexes, all neatly attired. Then another well-attired Tatar, who we learned was a brother of the merchant, appeared, to greet our arrival; and after all the arrangements were made for horses, and for some repairs to our carriage which it again needed, the merchant invited us to enter his dwelling.

We found every thing as neat and appropriate within the house, as without; and although we did not see what were doubtless its chief ornaments, the wife or wives, and the elder daughters of our Mussulman host, we saw evidences enough of superior comfort in the divans, stools, and materials of the *ménage*, to convince us of the well-regulated lives of its inhabitants. We breakfasted upon sweetmeats and coffee; after which we sat down on the merchant's divans and smoked our chiboocks. It was to myself like a dream of Egypt or Syria, which fair lands now became the subject of our conversation.

The Tatars were in raptures when I informed them that I had visited those countries, and they put many questions to me, concerning what I knew of the Mussulman life there, to which it was highly agreeable to reply, with as faithful descriptions as my experience, reading, and memory, and our means of intercourse through a translation, permitted. Some of the words

too, which I remembered of my never very great stock of the Arabic tongue, acquired while in those countries, happened to be known to them, probably from their occurrence in the scriptural and sacred portion of their language; and these, when pronounced, much delighted them.

We passed about an hour in this too enervating recreation, while a portion of the road and still another river were before us. After this, we returned to the court, where we found the reparations to render our carriage fit for completing the journey unfinished; and, as my companions and all the Tatars now engaged in aiding the work, I set off alone to make a little survey of such parts of the village as were nearest to us.

I passed by several of the farm-houses; and wherever I saw any of their habitants, I made the Arab salaam, used in Egypt, in touching the forehead and the breast with the right hand, and uttering the words "*Es selamo aley koon*" (Peace be with you), which was certainly understood, though I did not comprehend the reply which I received.

All the Tatars here seemed as busily occupied, as if they had been Christian men in our own Britain. One or two that were at their doors, invited me to enter; but as I could not hold any conversation with them, I declined, indicating as well as I was able, that time did not permit my stay. One of the good men, however, who seemed determined that his meaning should not be misinterpreted, brought me out some milk to drink, which was very grateful after the sweets and coffee upon which we had just breakfasted.

All I saw about these rural habitations exhibited the same respect for propriety and cleanliness which had been apparent at the merchant's. There were to be seen, indeed, indications of that happiness which it has been so justly said is oftener found in the retired dwellings

of competence and content, than amid the splendour of the court, or the turmoil of populous cities. And I will take this occasion to say, that no one could travel thus far, and hear and see all that fell under our observation concerning the lives and condition of the inhabitants of these Tatar villages, and compare them with the condition and state of morals generally, in even the better sort of villages inhabited by the Russo-Siberians, without regretting the inferior success of the popes to that of the Mussulman *imaams* in their lessons for enforcing attention to cleanliness and all the accompanying decencies of life, as well as in implanting those virtues which are so essential to the peace and security and proper conduct of the family life.

On my return to the merchant's dwelling, I found every thing ready, and we now took a hearty leave of our Tatar friends, and departed.

Soon after leaving this village, we had a view again of the River Tom from a slightly elevated portion of the land, which was now generally plain. We passed two other Tatar villages during the morning, in each of which there was a mosque; but we did not make any stay at either of them. We observed, however, the same cheerful air, with equal indications of industry and propriety prevailing among their inhabitants, that had so much attracted our attention at the village at which we breakfasted; and the same stubble land, so refreshing to the eye from its rarity, also appeared wherever the mosque was to be seen.

As we drew near the Tom, we found the land plain and low; but on reaching the ferry, we observed the same characteristic trait of high banks upon the right side of the river, though in a less degree than we had observed at the Irtysch and the Ob.

It is perhaps worthy of remark, that there seems a tendency in the rivers of the old continent to flow by

high banks upon the right hand. Besides what we were now observing in these great rivers of Siberia, as we passed them by, we had before perceived to be a characteristic of the Oka at Nijhni Novgorod, and of the Volga nearly as far as we followed its banks, from the site of the great emporium of merchandise to the passage of the river near Kazan. The same inclination, it will be remembered, is to be seen even throughout the course of our own Thames from London to its mouth most remarkably, but also above London, as visitors to Richmond must have observed.

On our arrival at the ferry of the Tom, we found the boat on the opposite side of the river, and several of the waggons of a caravan waiting to embark on her return. This threatened to give us a long detention: but a slight circumstance to which we were indebted to the Russian fondness for the Chinese beverage, favoured us, and obtained for us the preference over the loaded waggons. Thus, while the professor and myself were regretting the great delay we thought we were here to experience, our merchant and the master of the ferry most opportunely, not only recalled to their memories, that the law gave the preference to carriages with tea, as a wise provision against the detention and damage of that important article of merchandise, but also, found out that we had enough of the sober plant in our *tarantass* to come within the scope of the happily pliable law; and this was the more surprising, since we were on our journey towards the country from which the tea came, and directly from that to which it is carried. Thus, however, as the boat approached, orders were given to prepare our carriage for embarkation, upon which the conductors of the laden waggons began to contend for the rights to which they considered themselves entitled. But these good men were no doubt unacquainted with the law, and it may be, also, with

the course that the tea travelled; and a very few words sufficed to convince them of our right of preference, and we embarked.

Our passage across the Tom, though this river at this point of its course is about the same breadth as the Volga at Kazan, was easy. Where we landed, there were some Tatar women in their gay, high-coloured dresses, attending fishing nets along the shore; and we heard that they supplied Tomsk with the chief part of the fish consumed there, which they carried to the town in canoes, to be disposed of by the men in the market place.

We found the rays of the sun at the time we landed upon the right bank of the Tom, on the 27th of September, absolutely hot; and notwithstanding the rain, sleet, and even snow, that we had had several days before this, the thermometer was standing at six degrees of heat in the shade.

We now entered our shattered *tarantass* for the last time. There remained but four versts to complete our journey. For the first half of this distance, we passed over a dry soil, that produced small spruce trees, which were thinly scattered. After this, we came upon a narrow alluvious plain, formed by the winding of the river. From this point we obtained the first sight of the place of our repose, the long-looked-for Tomsk, the most famous of all the towns of Western Siberia. It stands partly upon elevated ground, and partly upon the inner portion of a low strip of land that here borders the banks of the Tom; and it now presented to us, quite distinct from our associations of expected rest, a most agreeable object to contemplate.

Upon entering the town, we drove through a street that reminded us of many of the towns we had seen in Russia. The merchant alighted at the house of a brother merchant of Tomsk, and with him also the

professor; and the *yemstchik* drove me to the house of a character well known in Siberia, and who will not escape notice in a future chapter.

Upon closing the account of this long journey, some remarks suggest themselves concerning the nature and qualities of the Siberian horse, and of his treatment and its effects, and also concerning the general results of our observations upon the character of the journey which we had now accomplished.

This tried friend and docile companion of man in every country, is, in Siberia, small in stature, round-barrelled, short-necked, and in this part of the country commonly bay-coloured, and he carries his head low and awkwardly elongated when in motion. He is strong in proportion to his weight, highly tractable, possessed of gentle temper, sportive and full of spirit when not overworked, and patient under sufferings, whether from ill-usage or fatigue. I do not think, indeed, that the Arabian horse, with whose qualities I have had opportunities of becoming acquainted in his own clime, is superior to the Siberian in any thing, except the beautiful symmetry of his form and his riding paces. Yet this our faithful and never treacherous servant, to which both the useful and the fine arts are so greatly indebted, which shares our danger in war, and to which we owe so many of our enjoyments and so much of our wealth, and by which the progress of civilisation itself, wherever it exists, has been advanced, is treated in Siberia (where, indeed, his services are more necessary than in any other country) with the utmost barbarity.

In this rigorous climate, this enduring animal has no more than an open shed to sleep in during the severest weather. Into this he is turned after a journey in winter, as white with the frost as the deer-skin in which his master is clothed, without even straw to lie upon and there fed with a spare quantity of the coarsest food.

Among the more humane portion of the Russians, it is a common saying, that if the transmigration of souls were to be the solution of the question concerning the mysterious future, and they had their choice into what animals they would be transformed, the horse would be the last they would choose, lest they should fall into the hands of a Russian *yemstchik* or *isvoshtchik*.

Russian humanity is never seen, indeed, under greater disadvantages, than in this instance. The Arab is the friend of his horse, which he will see cared for, even though he should want himself. The Russian or Siberian peasant is his severe master, who exacts every grain of his strength by blows accompanied with curses that show an utter want of all sentiment whatever, lodges him badly, or not at all, cares little how he feeds him, and never cleans him or clips a hair of his whole body from the hour of his birth to that of his death.

Some travellers, in Russia at least, I am quite aware, have given a very different account of the treatment of their horses by the *yemstchiks* and *isvoshtchiks*, and spoken of the multitude of gentle words which these drivers address to their animals. But I fear curses indicative of any thing but humanity, have been in many instances mistaken for blessings, or the instances have been exceptions, and probably have occurred when the horses were the sole property of those who drove them. I have known Russians declare, that they have been obliged, and this in Russia Proper, to shut the windows of diligences, on account of the profane and indecent language used by the *yemstchiks* to their horses; and I have heard of this being a subject of amusement to some, and of scandal to other travellers in sledges and other private carriages.

There is one remarkable practice, however, in the treatment of the horse, which is almost universal, and

though apparently the very climax of barbarity, is supposed to be excused by reasons too constantly given to admit of the supposition that they are unfounded, although, perhaps, the nature of the animal has adapted itself to the usage, rather than necessity imposed treatment so unlike any thing heard of elsewhere. It is the custom during a journey, which is always rapid and violent, even though a stage should endure for the entire day, not only to keep the horse the whole time without any food whatsoever, but even to give him nothing for the space of from four to six, and even sometimes twelve hours, after his arrival at the station at which he is to repose. Often, too, he is tied up, and not suffered to lie down during the whole of his long fast.

Whether the practice be justifiable or not, it is certain that it sometimes leads, among such an inconsiderate people as the Siberians, to the most cruel consequences. I shall have, indeed, instances to mention within my own experience, where horses, after fourteen hours of severe travelling, have been left the whole night without food from mere negligence, although the same journey had been performed for several previous days, and the poor animals were obliged to set off again fasting, to labour again for the same number of hours, and perhaps to do the same for several succeeding days.

The journey which we had now completed from Ikaterinburg, the last town at which we slept, or made more than a few hours' stay, to Tomsk, was performed in exactly a fortnight, travelling at all times by day and by night. This may be considered to be about the average number of days that the journey will occupy at the same season; for what we lost by the state of the roads during the last two or three days, was compensated by the aid we had from the moon during the greater part of the time, and the light from the stars during the nights on which we had less of that of the moon, which,

with the few exceptions mentioned, was always sufficient to permit us to travel as rapidly by night as by day.

With regard to the many perils which our friends at Nijhni Novgorod seemed to see us so wantonly court, nothing need be added to the almost daily account that has been given of all we experienced up to this time, when we were at least in the very heart of the dreaded Siberia. The length of this journey was 1800 versts, and our distance from Moscow was now 3525 versts.

CHAP. XXI.

TOMSK.

Population. — Position. — Importance. — General Description.— View of the Town from an elevated Point.— Character of its Inhabitants. — Three Orders. — Chinovnik. — Exiles. — Their Classification.— Character.— Treatment.— Colonies.— Remarkable Organisation.— Distinction between Political and Criminal Exiles.— Tatars

THE departmental town of Tomsk is the capital of the district of the same name, in the great western government of Siberia. It is situated upon the right bank of the River Tom, which is one of the numerous tributaries of the Ob, and, at about twenty or twenty-five versts from the point of junction of the tributary with the main stream of the grand river. It lies in the direct line between the Ural Mountains and the capital of Eastern Siberia, from each of which points it is about equally distant, and, in the vincinity of some of the more productive mineral districts of the country. It is the residence of the governor of the department of which it is the capital, who is usually an officer of engineers, and superintends in an especial manner all the mining operations of the imperial government within the district.

Favoured by these advantages, Tomsk has become in point of wealth and population superior to all the towns in Siberia, except the capital of the grand eastern government. Its population is about 9000; and its wealth is probably greater than that of any town of an equal number of inhabitants in Russia Proper.

The town is built partly upon two hills, separated by a

narrow vale, and partly upon low and even ground, and is divided into nearly two equal parts by a torrent which runs down the vale, and continues its course through the town along the bottom of a deep fissure in the ground, until it falls into the Tom.

This miniature river, upon entering the lower part of the town, makes an elbow, which admits of its banks forming one side of the street that connects the two extremities of the town, and upon the opposite side of which have been built detached houses, overlooking an open space beyond the fissure, upon which stand the *Gostinnoi Dvor*, or Russian Bazaar, and the buildings of a general market-place, and beyond which flows the broad River Tom.

Near the middle of this connecting street, or single line of houses overlooking the space and buildings above mentioned, stands the house in which I was domiciled while at Tomsk. From this point, I set off in company with my fellow-traveller from Nijhni Novgorod, who called upon me for the purpose, upon the morning after our arrival, and under the guidance of a native, to make a first survey of the town.

Turning upon our left hand, we found several large houses, neatly painted, which our guide informed us belonged to wealthy China merchants; and at the distance of less than a quarter of a verst, we came to the proper street, with houses on both sides. Here we found three or four shops in houses standing apart, and stocked with the little necessaries of the household economy, such as our grocers, hardware and earthenware merchants, and some others, divide among them; and there appeared to be nothing wanting of the more ordinary articles of the European *ménage*. In several shops of a superior class, were exposed the more valuable articles of merchandise, such as cloths, furs, cotton and linen goods, among which we found in one

that we entered, which was kept by a Tatar merchant, articles of English, French, and German manufacture, as well as others of the coarser description of Russian goods. The prices, however, of every thing were from three to four times higher than we usually pay for the same articles in the west of Europe. Some were even valued as much as six times higher than the prices of London and Paris.

At the distance of a few hundred yards further, continuing the same street, we mounted the hill upon which stands the portion of the upper town, which is upon this side the ravine or fissure above mentioned. This brought us to the quarter occupied by the more wealthy portion of the inhabitants. The houses here also stand apart from one another. Some are of brick, and several are built after the model of those which are placed in the open parts of Moscow, and were painted with as much taste as is commonly displayed in the exterior decoration of houses in the towns in Russia. Some have walls painted straw-colour, or a faint yellow, and others a pure white, and all have green roofs. They have all, also, their ends fronting the street, and their doors at the side, in a spacious court, and several have gardens behind them.

Upon one side of this portion of the main street, smaller streets lead to a quarter occupied by the dwellings of the artisans and the peasants, and, upon the other side, the backs of the houses which compose the street, approach a precipice which overlooks a portion of the lower town on the opposite side of the dividing stream, which is the Tatar quarter, in the midst of which stands a neatly painted mosque.

After a short survey of this upper quarter, we returned to the centre of the town, and set out again to make a little tour also in the opposite direction.

Having passed over the bridge, to the right side of

the ravine, we found the main street still proceeding in a direct line for about a verst, and a hill rising on the right hand. At the top of this hill stands a Romish church, provided for the use of the Polish and German part of the population which happen to be of that communion.

The higher portion of this division of the town, which is upon the right side the main street, is occupied by artisans, peasants, miners and exiles; and that part also of the lower portion through which this street runs, is formed of mean dwellings occupied by the same classes.

After turning upon our left hand, immediately upon this side the bridge, and passing the building which represents our town-hall, and leaving the open space, with the market-place and the *gostinnoi dvor* before mentioned, upon our left, we entered a street, little inferior in the style of its buildings to that occupied by the wealthier classes upon the opposite side of the town. In this street stands the house of the governor, with several of the houses of other officials; and in inferior streets on either side, are found the same description of dwellings as those of the meaner portions of the rest of the town; and these are inhabited by families of the classes which compose the mass of the population.

After passing nearly to the extremity of the better street, we turned towards the river, facing the banks of which we found an open line of a mean class of houses, between which and the river we continued our walk towards the centre of this side of the town, until we came to the *gostinnoi dvor*, into which we now entered. In this establishment, so indispensable in every Russian town, we found all the arrangements similar to those of which a notice has been already made; but the supply

of goods generally, was, as we were prepared to expect, comparatively very scanty, and of an inferior description.

We concluded this little out-door survey of Tomsk by mounting the hill upon which stands the upper portion of the town, as above mentioned, which is on this side the ravine and the valley. From this elevation is obtained the best view of Tomsk. Among the dark edifices, are seen the gay cupolas of six of nine churches of which the town can boast; and in the distance, upon one side, appears the River Tom, upon the opposite banks of which the stunted and dark fir trees of the country are seen very thinly scattered; and in the other direction, appears a slightly undulated country as scantily sown with the same dusky vegetation.

The inhabitants of Tomsk may be divided into three orders, in every one of which are found two or more classes. But that we may in this account of the town properly distinguish the voluntary colonist of every grade from the constrained inhabitants of a penal colony, who are not in a civil sense a part of the population, we shall have to regard the exiles of all orders and grades apart, though we shall find them mingled with all classes of the free population, under regulations which properly distinguish the political from the criminal exiles, and also the degrees of crime which the latter were sent into Siberia to expiate.

The first, then, of the three orders into which we must divide the population, may be considered to comprise all the civil and military authorities, from the governor down to the lowest *chinovnik*, or under civil official.

In the second order, we may place the principals and agents of the mining companies, and the merchants of the several grades, including of course the Tatars, and

those of all religious faiths, with all who are employed in their service.

The third order will then consist of all the artisans, and the inferior tradesmen and peasants, composed for the most part of the descendants of exiles, and the voluntary colonists for some generations back.

We will now divide the first of the above orders of the population — that is, all the *chinovnik* — into two distinct classes, in the same manner that conventional usages, with but slight variations, divide the same order of the people in all countries.

The first of these, consists of the governor, and the general in command of the troops within the department, whose appointments are usually for a limited term, the *gorodnichii* or chief of the police, the *ispravnik* or judge, the post-master, the agents and engineers in the mining service, the chief architect, and several others whose appointments are permanent or usually endure for a long period.

The second class of the same order of the people may be considered to be composed of all the under *chinovnik* in all the departments superintended by the above-mentioned superior officers. These are generally sent from Russia, after having been selected from among the classes whose attainments do not commonly exceed the acquirements of reading, writing, and the first elements of arithmetic.

In the second order of the people, the sole distinction is, between those engaged in the proper occupations that belong to mining, and those engaged in commerce.

In the third order, the varieties are yet less manifest. Here the artisan, inferior tradesman, and peasant or labourer, are with but few exceptions confounded with one another, by similarity of manners and conduct.

We now come to that important class which form

so considerable a portion of the population of the country. But in order to introduce them in their proper character in this and other towns in Siberia, it is necessary to recur to the circumstances which attended their settlement in the country.

From the time of Peter the Great, exiles have been continually sent from Russia Proper into Siberia. The number which have been sent since that period up to the present time is uncertain; but the number that now annually pass the Ural Mountains is about 10,000, including many of the wives of the exiles, who voluntarily follow the fortunes of their husbands. But owing to the distance, which, save in the case of some who remain in the nearer governments, is not performed in less than two years, many of these never reach their destination; and thus the effective augmentation of the population by this means does not probably exceed 8000 souls a-year.

The exiles are formed into five distinct classes; and every one receives the treatment in the country which is proportionate to the offence to be expiated.

The first class, consists of those who are condemned for the highest crimes and offences against the law of Russia.

The second class comprises all those who are found in a state of vagrancy throughout the country.

The third class consists of those condemned for minor offences against the laws.

The fourth consists of those who are condemned by the courts established in the villages, and for the most part for petty offences.

The fifth class is composed of serfs condemned by the order of the government, upon application from the proprietors of the estates to which they belong.

The exiles, generally, after the passage of the mountains, are distributed through the country, at

various distances from the boundary of the colony, depending upon the character of their offences. Those who are condemned for the highest offences, are usually sent to the eastern provinces, but those who suffer for the lighter, remain in the western.

They now submit to a division into three classes only. Those of the first class are called *katorschniki.* They consist of such as are condemned for life, or for a long period, to work in the mines. They are considered as civilly defunct. Some of the most criminal of these are sent to the silver mines at Nertchinsk, in the government of Irkoutsk. Before the reign of Alexander, criminals of this class laboured for the rest of their lives beneath the ground, where they were at their decease interred; but at the present day their treatment, as we shall hereafter have occasion to see, is very different.

Those of the second class are called *loslannyje na raboto.* They consist of such as are condemned for a shorter period, and designed for colonists upon the expiration of their term of forced labour. These are employed in the service of the government in mere ordinary labour.

Those of the third class are called *loslannyje na poselenye.* They consist of such as are condemned for the lightest offences which incur the penalty of exile. They are considered upon their arrival in the country to have in effect already expiated their faults, and they are at once established by the government as proper colonists. Sometimes they are settled in villages already existing in the vicinity of the towns, and at other times they are placed in villages laid out and built expressly for their reception. They receive, moreover, the government aid in every thing proper for their establishment, even to such a sum of money as is deemed necessary to accomplish that object; and for three years they are free from the taxes levied upon the older colonists.

Almost the only inconveniences, indeed, which these exiles suffer, consist in their confinement to the villages in which they are settled, beyond the limits of which they are not permitted to pass the night, and in an interdiction from changing their avocation. They are in effect peasants *glebæ adscripti*, without the conditions of service to which the serfs of Russia Proper are subjected.

But the most remarkable feature in all that regards the settlement of the exiles, is the organisation of the civil affairs of these new villages. At the head of every village is placed a simple soldier, ordinarily a Cossack, who administers justice and punishes all petty offenders, by thrashing them soundly with a stick. Nevertheless, in case of the commission of grave crimes, the administration of the law rests with the court of the nearest town, or is entrusted to the *zasidytelle*, who is here a sort of itinerant magistrate. This state of society, however, does not endure beyond the generation which succeeds that in which it is established. After this, a *starosta* is appointed, by whom justice is administered as in Russia.

It now becomes necessary to mention the important moral distinction in the classification of the exiles, in all that regards their position in the proper society of the places they inhabit, at the different periods of their exile. This consists simply in the different conventional treatment, as well by the government as by the people, of those who have been exiled for state offences, and those who suffer the penalty of any other offences whatsoever. Thus, while the punishment of both is the same in regard to actual settlement, restraint, and civil disabilities, and is proportionate alike to the gravity of the offence against the law; yet, as they become relieved from the first restrictions which follow their arrival, the difference of the position in which they severally stand

in relation to the rest of the population, is very great. The criminal exiles remain for life under the moral ban, which neither pardon nor forgetfulness is able wholly to remove; while the political exiles, as soon as the first year or two of their exile removes the restraints which are first imposed in respect to the place of their abode and their confinement, enter, without any moral stain, into the society, wherever it is found, of the same rank as that to which they properly belonged when in their state of freedom in Russia.

Not any of either of these orders of exiles can engage in any trade or handicraft. Their proper avocation is the cultivation of the ground, which they may follow to any extent.

But there are yet other inhabitants of Tomsk, who, though in a civil sense a part of its population, are morally more distinct from the Russo-Siberians, than even the aboriginal inhabitants of the wild desert. This part of the population consists of the Tatars. Their religion has too powerful possession of their minds, to permit them to bend to the accidents of their external relations, any further than is sufficient to enable them to profit by the advantages of civilised government.

CHAP. XXII.

TOMSK.

The Governor-general Anosoff.—Government House.—Children.—Reception.—An *Albinos* quondam Englishman.—Remarks concerning the English in Russia.—Russian and English Loyalty.—Impolitic Measure of the Russian Government.—General Domitti.—Interview.—Reception.—*Soirée* at Gospodin Astaschaff's.—Gospojah Astaschaff.—Character of the Entertainment.—St. Petersburg Lady who spoke English.—Curiosity about England.—Exiles.—Supper.—Pressing Invitation.

I FOUND, upon my return to my dwelling, that the hour had nearly arrived at which the Governor-general Anosoff, who at this time administered the government, received those whom duty or inclination brought to wait upon him. I therefore took this first opportunity of presenting myself, which I deemed the more necessary, as I was without introductory letters of any kind to any one in the town. Hearing that the general, like his countrymen generally of his order, was a good linguist, I took with me neither interpreter nor servant of any kind. Passing the guard of honour at the door, and the soldiers in an inner chamber, who take off the upper garments of visitors, I made my wants known to the orderly in attendance, and was shown into an ample hall, where I remained while an announcement was made to his excellency, who was occupied in another chamber, that a stranger was waiting an interview. It appeared that I had rather exceeded punctuality; for a gentleman of the order of the *chinovnik*, as it was easy to see from the orders with which he was decorated, in passing

through the room, as he made his retreat from the presence, informed me, that the governor was not yet quite ready to receive visitors, and that I should have to sit down and wait a little. This was, however, of no importance. My time, which I have never found worth much, was now worth nothing. Besides, I had something to occupy my thoughts with, for I could not avoid speculating upon what the general might think was his duty, considering the circumstances under which I made my appearance.

I could not receive any answer to my letter to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, written at Kazan, before my further advance into the country, and I was therefore not without apprehension of being somewhat closely questioned concerning my objects in the interior of Siberia. Of one thing, however, my experience encouraged me to feel assured, that I should at least meet with politeness. And I had nothing to conceal, my objects being mere curious interest concerning the country and the lives of those that dwelt in it. Thus my business indeed with the governor, apart from the proper respect due to his office, was only to obtain permission to make a convenient sojourn at Tomsk, and to proceed afterwards into Eastern Siberia. Had my position, however, even been that of one waiting the opportunity to enter upon any subject touching his most vital interests, and with the unknown arbiter of his fortunes, my state of suspense would not have been of long duration, nor would any mistrust concerning the character of the governor have even endured till the moment of the interview arrived; for the second-hand of the clock, which was suspended in the hall, had not time to make above three revolutions after I took my seat, before a door opened and a party of romping children both boys and girls, loaded with toys and full of good humour, ran out and began immediately to press

the stranger to join in their sports; which at least indicated that the forthcoming general was an indulgent papa, and it might be concluded almost as certainly, a worthy gentleman.

Unwilling, however, to appear to want the respect which was proper to the occasion, which might be the case, if his excellency, upon entering the room, should find a grown-up stranger turned baby in his reception hall, I declined romping with the children. The elder, however, of the girls, who spoke a little French, and who seemed as if she were accustomed to refusals of the kind, and knew the way to obtain her ends upon such occasions, ran back to the inner room, and after holding a dialogue in her own tongue with some one certainly not a child, which I distinctly heard, but could not of course understand, presently brought back word that her papa would not be able to come out for several minutes, adding, that I must in the meantime play with them. Thus, there seemed no choice about the matter; and as I was not in Windsor Castle or in Downing Street, I gave my consent, and to the great delight of the children joined in their play.

The hall was large and uncarpetted, and a capital place for the purpose; so we trundled hoops and tossed balls, and made almost as much racket as boys are wont to make upon a breaking-up day, and for a full half hour.

At length, while we were engaged in this manner, the general made his appearance, and immediately the children, who seemed to be well under command, notwithstanding they were upon their own play-ground, now retired, and left their grown-up playmate alone in the presence.

As soon as bowings and compliments, the preludes to business between strangers, were over, I made my wants known to the governor in as few words as

possible. His excellency appeared a little surprised at the sudden advent and the demand of a stranger and a foreigner. He began the conversation, however, by some questions concerning the accidents of the journey, and then proceeded to ask others which regarded the future.

The general seemed amused with the account I gave him of the little adventures of the journey, and he did not exhibit any disposition to distrust any thing I said concerning my future objects. On the contrary, after a little consideration, he said he did not at present foresee any obstacle, either to my sojourn at Tomsk, or to the prosecution of my journey towards Eastern Siberia: and, before I took leave, I received from him an invitation to attend his *soirées* and dinners, which were weekly.

Thus, I retired, well pleased with my polite reception, and the unreserved manner of the general, and tolerably assured that there existed no obstacle to my continuing my journey when it should be convenient for me so to do.

It was not my intention to call upon any one else in Tomsk, until I had had the opportunity of meeting the *élite* of the people of the town in the apartments of the governor; but as it unfortunately happened, that the governor's lady was taken seriously ill before her first *soirée*, I remained several days confined to the society of my *quondam* countryman with whom I was lodged, and of whom, as he was rather a remarkable person in the country, I shall now make more particular mention.

It may perhaps be remembered by some who are not extremely young (for it may be above a quarter of a century ago), that there were in London, and I believe living in Holborn, an honest couple who had the good fortune to be blessed with an *albinos* male child, which

was exhibited about that time to the wondering cockneys and country-folks. In this interior town of Siberia, at the present time dwells this prodigy in nature, now a Russian subject, and occupied, instead of ministering to the appetite of the lovers of novelty among the cockneys, in supplying the good people of the country with champagne, and other wines of France.

"Albinos," which is now the only name by which this once Englishman is known, shines in the civil councils of the town, and is esteemed for his general knowledge (for he has been a great reader), as well as for his remarkable attainments as a linguist. I do not know whether men whose skin happens to be whiter than that of other people, and whose eyes are red instead of blue or brown, or any of the other less brilliant colours, are wont usually to possess faculties in any way peculiar: but "Albinos" seemed to me a prodigy in philological acquirements. He spoke six languages with, as I believe, wonderful correctness, but certainly with fluency.

Finding my quondam countryman much esteemed in the country, as well for his character as his abilities, it was gratifying to observe, that neither time, distance, nor the snows of Siberia, had had power to chill the affections that belonged to the Englishman. Commercial transactions, however, in which foreigners are not here upon the same footing in every branch as Russian subjects, had involved a question which threatened his ruin, and had obliged him to change his allegiance — a step rarely taken by our countrymen, — and to become a Russian subject.

I cannot resist here making a remark which the occasion may justify. It has been observed by several writers upon the political and social state of Russia, and I am assured with great truth, that the English are the only foreigners resident in the country who maintain

their allegiance to their sovereign untarnished, even after a long residence, and leave the inheritance intact to their heirs born in the country, and by whom it is sometimes cherished, even to the third generation. To this most commendable perseverance in the natural affection for our country, and the rational loyalty which we acquire at home, and cherish abroad, the above instance was an exception arising from necessity. Now I feel justified in further remarking upon this subject, that it were well for the Russian Government to consider the effects of refusing the full privilege of Russian subjects to foreigners in carrying on their affairs, without the fulfilment of conditions that tend to depreciate the respect for that watchword and powerful alarum in time of danger of every monarchical government worth preserving, and of none more than that of Russia herself — loyalty.

Perhaps there may be this difference between the Russian and English sentiment. With us, our loyalty, no doubt, is our patriotism intelligibly expressed, yet not unmixed with attachment to the sovereign with whom we are united in the sacred bond; whereas, in Russia, the patriotism or nationality of the subject, is probably the overt sign of the affection which he bears to his sovereign. Both at least have the same end and aim.

Now with respect to the immediate effect of this state of the law in Russia upon the Russians themselves, it may be remarked, that the subjects of the empire, but more especially the instructed classes, as well in the interior of the country as in the capitals, respect the actions and opinions of foreigners, though without any diminution of their proper nationality; and every stranger obliged to forsake his allegiance, must consequently present an example of disregard for the institutions of his own country, which at least may

have a tendency to produce the same effects upon those by whom it is witnessed.

Although the government house remained closed, in consequence of the continued illness of the governor's lady, there was no interruption to the usual course of *soirées* at the houses of the rest of the polite inhabitants of the town. The commandant of the troops within the province, the General Domitti, who was residing here, was the second person in importance at Tomsk, and therefore next entitled, by the customs of Russian society, to the complimentary visit of a stranger. When a few days therefore had elapsed, I called at the general's private residence.

After passing the several doors, and the ante-rooms within which all persons of importance are wont to enclose themselves during the rigorous season, and ascending a flight of stairs, I was left in a hall something like that at the government house, while the soldier that had conducted me, carried notice to the general, who was at the time in an inner room, that a stranger was in waiting.

Not a moment elapsed before the general made his appearance, and with outstretched hand, and every indication of hearty welcome, before one word of ceremonious compliment was uttered, led me to his inner apartments. My name, nation, and even countenance, were already well known to him. He was constantly in his droshky, or *sani* (sledge), and I took exercise every day on foot; and, as might be supposed, a stranger could not walk about the streets of Tomsk for several days unobserved. I seemed indeed to have made quite a warm friend in a moment, at the very small cost of a visit. It happened, too, that there was to be, that very evening, a gathering of the leading families of Tomsk, to celebrate the natal day of the lady at the head of the fixed inhabitants of the town; and the general, before

I took my leave, begged that I would accompany him to assist in doing honour to the occasion, and, at the same time, to make the acquaintance of the principal people of the place; to which I very readily assented.

The gallant officer called for me in his *sani* (for the snow was now on the ground, though not yet permanently set), and we drove towards the quarter before mentioned as that in which the more wealthy of the inhabitants of Tomsk reside.

The house which we were about to enter, was that of Gospodin Astaschaff, who is the first of all the wealthy resident proprietors of mines in this part of Siberia. This gentleman is one of a company of six partners, who possess some of the most productive of the mines of the precious metals in the country; and he is, at the same time, the sole proprietor of several entire mines, and is wholly indebted for his riches to his own enterprise and perseverance.

Arrived at Gospodin Astaschaff's dwelling, in the better part of the town, we alighted at a door in the court, and after ascending a broad staircase, came to an ante-room, which we found full of evidences that many of the guests had already arrived. About half a dozen servants were here waiting, and we were quickly disrobed, and shown into the chief apartments of the festivities.

I confess I have seldom been more surprised, and have seldom experienced more agreeable feelings, than at this moment. Accustomed so long to the wretched hovels of the peasants, and to the sort of company that the traveller must expect alone to find in the villages of Siberia, and for many hours of the day to look almost on vacancy, even the moderate degree of comfort I had elsewhere seen, appeared luxury; but the brilliancy, so unexpected, of this apartment, with its moving spectacle, seemed more to resemble what is seen at the *soirées* of

the richer folks at Moscow or St. Petersburg, than any image my fancy had previously drawn of a Siberian entertainment.

The lady of the house advanced to meet us, as I followed the general, and a ceremonious presentation and reception now took place, beneath the surface of which, however, plainly appeared the marks of a sincere welcome.

Gospojah (Mrs.) Astaschaff was a lady of St. Petersburg, as I had been already informed. Gospodin Astaschaff had made a journey to the modern capital a few years before this time, and had married this lady when she was not very long freed from the leading strings of the seminary. The lady was robed on this occasion in due proportion to her station at Tomsk, and, being happily possessed of charms of person, with the elegant manners of the first society at the capital, appeared to great advantage amidst her guests.

We now bowed to the hospitable hostess for the present, and the brilliant world of Tomsk society was before us. We found a suite of rooms all well lighted, and filled with gay company celebrating the day, just in the manner we enjoy ourselves upon grand occasions in the larger towns of Europe, every one according to his or her humour, in the particular room disposed for their favourite amusement. In that which we had first entered, the younger sort were telling steps to the notes of a band; and in the next, sat on soft-cushioned chairs, or reclined upon couches, those who more delighted in ease and conversation; and in the third, which was honoured by the presence of the governor, were playing at several tables those who preferred the little stimulus to thought which cards, chess, and draughts afford: and many of the guests were promenading through the rooms, each sex, according to the mode of the country, apart from the other.

In every room servants were handing about ices and preserves, and a profusion of champagne, all ready poured out in glasses set on large tea-trays.

After we had passed through these rooms, the general's next care was to introduce me to a lady who spoke English, and who had lately arrived from St. Petersburg with her husband Gospodin Doobrova, a medical gentleman in the military service. We soon encountered the young wife, who having heard already that an Englishman had arrived in Tomsk, was prepared for the occasion of practising her English.

As I had not lately heard the sound of my native tongue, which the continentals generally may be said to be only beginning to appreciate, and rarely speak tolerably, that of its very consonants, flowing smoothly from the lips of a well-bred St. Petersburg lady, fell upon my ear like "sounds of sweetest melody;" and there was just enough of foreign accent in this lady's pronunciation, to make the agreeable variation which, when there is deficiency in words, seems to supply their place. To the lady, however, the novelty was yet greater than to myself, as she had come to Siberia almost directly from school, where her teacher had been of her own sex, and she had never conversed with an Englishman before.

Several of the other guests too, who joined our party, listened with curious interest to the tongue, which they now heard spoken for the first time, in which many works were written that they had long ago read in translation, and admired. Questions concerning England and English customs were naturally uppermost among those asked by the lady with whom I conversed. As her reading, which had been all indeed at school (for she had brought no books with her, and they were very rare articles at Tomsk) was not deficient, there was no lack of interesting subjects to converse upon. Like

almost all the foreign ladies with whom I have had opportunities of conversing, she was most curious about Scotland, its hills, dales, lakes, islands, and old castles, from having imbibed more strongly the descriptions in Scott's works, and in those especially where the scenes are chiefly or exclusively laid in that part of Britain, than any thing she had read of the southern part of the island; and yet she did not want a fair knowledge of proper English history.

The general having thus fairly introduced me to the good company of Tomsk, now joined the card-players, and I passed my time very agreeably, among those who preferred the lounging apartment, in interchange of thought with all with whom I was able to converse.

Every one expressed great pleasure in having an Englishman among them, and the hope that I should make some stay in what they called, in spite of the elegancé that surrounded us, this desert country.

Among the guests in this gay assemblage of the polite inhabitants of Tomsk, I was surprised to find several of the political exiles, who, it is generally thought in the west of Europe, are all toiling in the mines beneath the surface of the ground. But as opportunities enough will afterwards occur, in which something further must be said of their real condition, it is not now necessary to say more than that although those we met on this occasion were mingled with the rest of the company, a feeling was prevalent among them, whether arising from a delicate sense of propriety in reference to any sentiment they might respect in others, or from depression of spirits with themselves, that induced them, without exception, to refrain from joining in the gayer amusements of the ball-room.

The evening was closed by a supper composed of many delicacies, besides abundance of the most precious wines of Europe, which were certainly enjoyed in a

manner, that if the good wishes of the guests for the lady whose natal day they were celebrating were in proportion to the quantity consumed, of which there could be little doubt, Gospojah Astaschaff had nothing to desire in this particular.

Upon taking leave of the host and hostess, I received a pressing invitation to be their constant guest at such hours as might be most agreeable to myself. After which the general drove me to my quarters, it need not be said, as well satisfied with my introduction to the society of Tomsk, as impressed by the unexpected character of the Siberian entertainment.

CHAP. XXIII.

TOMSK.

Visits from some of the Inhabitants of Tomsk.—A remarkable Character in Siberia.—Obtained the Name of Alcibiades.—Visit two Millionnaires.—Employment of Wealth by a Millionnaire at Tomsk.—Grounds laid out in Chinese Style.—Towers.—Pagodas.—Temples.—Tower of Babel.—Bridges.—Conservatories.—Menageries.—Specimens of Siberian Sculpture.—Griffins.—*Soirée.* at the House of General Domitti.—Polish Professor of Geology.—Ischybylsky.—His Account of the Altai Mountains.—A French Marquis.—Commanded a Russian Ship at Navarino.—His Opinion of the Cause of the Battle.—Character in general of Siberian *Soirées.*—Domestic Establishments.—Tutor.—Governesses.—Generosity of Gospodin Astaschaff.—A Miser.

On the morning after the gay display at the house of the leading family of Tomsk, I was called upon by Gospodin Philomonoff and Gospodin Garrockhoff, two other proprietors of mines, and next in wealth and consideration to Gospodin Astaschaff among the enterprising and more fortunate of the mining speculators of Western Siberia. I was not at home at the time these gentlemen called. The next day, however, I received a visit from another gentleman, originally of one of the Russo-German provinces, but who had been many years in Siberia, whose acquaintance indeed I had previously made, but who now came expressly to accompany me in the capacity of interpreter, to return the calls of the above-named two gentlemen, with whom my lack of the Russian tongue, and their somewhat deficient knowledge of the French, rendered it impossible for me to converse without assistance.

But as any account of the society of Tomsk, or perhaps of Siberia generally, that should omit mentioning the gentleman who now came to do me this act of kindness, would be deficient in an essential particular, and as I had the good fortune of being well acquainted with him, both here and afterwards further eastward in Siberia, I shall not neglect this first opportunity, of making particular mention of my future friend and frequent companion and guide.

This gentleman is known throughout the circle of his acquaintances, both at Tomsk and in other parts of Siberia, for his many social and amiable qualities, not unmingled with that disposition towards the indulgence of epicurean pleasures, which, scarcely two generations back, would have been considered among ourselves to crown all virtue in the brightest genius and best fellow of the town. He had been educated at one of the capitals of Russia Proper, and he possessed in a high degree the talent so remarkable among the instructed classes in the northern countries of Europe of acquiring languages with surprising facility. He wrote several of the modern tongues correctly, and spoke them fluently; and, although neither rich, nor what might even be called successful in the world of mining speculation with which he was identified, he was so much respected for his manly and open character, and his society was so coveted for his everlasting fund of humour, that the good people of Tomsk had employed all their learning to find, if it were possible, a character in history with whom they might in some sort compare their good companion, and whose name they might give him, in place of that which his ancestors had borne upon the western side of the Ural Mountains. At length, after much research, they alighted upon Alcibiades, to whom they thought their friend, after due allowance

for the difference of times, of countries, and of circumstances, bore the nearest resemblance, and by whose name he was now usually called. As often, therefore, as this gentleman may be mentioned, this name will be used, as being by no means without as good authority as may perhaps be given for most acquired appellations or surnames in any other land.

Accompanied by Alcibiades then, I set off to return the visits of two of the three millionnaires of Tomsk, whose houses I had not yet entered. They both resided in the same street as Gospodin Astaschaff, and in houses only inferior among those in the town, to the dwelling of that wealthy proprietor.

We called first upon Gospodin Philomonoff, from whom I received, as well as from his lady, the accustomed welcome, and general invitation, too warmly and politely given to be supposed, as in some countries, no invitation at all.

We next called upon Gospodin Garrockhoff, from whom, and also from his lady, I received the same reception and polite invitation. This gentleman's house is among those which overhang the cliffs from which the view before mentioned, in speaking of this part of the town, is obtained. All the large houses of the quarter have gardens; but those attached to that of Gospodin Garrockhoff are the most remarkable; and as it was now the end of October and the snow was lying upon the ground, my friend was anxious that I should not miss seeing them before the snow should quite bury every thing, as he considered them a real curiosity in the way of ornamental grounds. He therefore expressed a desire to show them to me, and Gospodin Garrockhoff willingly conducted us to make as good a survey of his plantations as the season permitted. They were certainly curious; and, as an account of them may serve to show the taste and turn of mind of a Siberian mil-

lionnaire, I shall not omit giving a rather minute description of them.

In the rear of this millionnaire's dwelling, we found two buildings in wood, forming stables and carriage houses, and overhanging the terrace before mentioned, and also the gardens. Here we were requested by the proprietor, before we proceeded further, to mount a ladder which conducted to the top of these buildings. Arrived here, we found ourselves upon the turreted battlements of a fancy Gothic tower overhanging the steep. From this elevation, though the view of the town was inferior to that seen from the opposite side of the narrow stream which runs through its different quarters, we overlooked the Tatar quarter of Tomsk, and a noble prospect of the great river, which, after flowing from its sources within the bounds of the Celestial Empire, is seen descending towards the north, through the wild and silent wastes of the surrounding country, in its course towards the Ob, finally to lose itself in the icy sea; and, immediately beneath us, appeared the gardens which we were about to visit.

We next descended the cliff, by a flight of steps, to a grassy slope, which was partially covered with snow, and thence to a walk which ran parallel with the cliff through the grounds, and from which other walks led at various angles to a path, formed upon the edge of a broad and deep natural fissure in the earth, the bottom of which was filled with water.

It is in the ancient capital of Russia, that the traveller in the north of Europe first observes the decided tendency towards what we commonly call the Oriental style in buildings and plantations, and which he will find increase as he proceeds towards the east. The sacred edifices, in particular, of Moscow, recall the dome and minaret of the temples of the worshippers of Allah, and the city gardens, with their ornamental pavilions,

occasionally remind us of our ideas, at least, of the fairy land of Arabia or of China. But it has been reserved to a millionnaire at Tomsk to make, I believe, the first bold step, within the wide dominions of the Czar, towards the introduction of the very Chinese style, in the arrangement of pleasure grounds, and in the character of the edifices to adorn them.

These gardens are about 200 yards in length, and about 100 in breadth, with the longer side parallel with the cliff, upon which the fancy fortress, already mentioned, stands. The deep fissure in the ground, towards which we now descended, lies parallel with the cliff, and divides the gardens into two unequal parts, leaving the broader portion, which consists of more uneven ground than the narrower, upon the inner side. The greater part of the uneven ground falling from the base of the cliff to the walk by the fissure, is planted with the rarer shrubs of the climate. A row of lime trees borders the walk, and a railing, which is ornamental to the gardens, runs along either side of the fissure. The ground on this side is intersected with narrow paths, and has several pavilions placed on the descent, of mixed style of construction, in which the Chinese prevails. Upon a grass plot upon the less elevated portion of the slope, stands a miniature Tower of Babel, that may be ascended after the manner that the generation we have to thank for every head-ache we get in the study of foreign tongues, ascended its memorable prototype. And upon the cliff, ranging with the Gothic towers, there is also a large pavilion, commanding nearly the same view as that seen from the towers, and already mentioned.

There are several contrivances in different parts of the gardens, for the benefit of such of the liberal proprietor's fellow-citizens as prefer healthy amusements in the open air, to cards and worse thieves of time than they are within doors. One of these consists of a pole of about

twelve feet in height, placed in the ground, with an arm projecting from the top, from the end of which hangs a string, to which is attached a ring. The art of the game consists in throwing the ring in the air directly from the pole, with such accurate calculation as to cause it to catch a hook attached to the pole on its recoil. And this play is said to be a source of great diversion, and certainly must be an innocent one, to the summer visitors to the gardens.

But the most characteristic objects in the grounds, and those which give them chiefly the air and style of the Eastern country above named, are two perfect pagodas, one of which stands at each of the outer angles of the grounds. From the pointed corners of the two-fold or three-fold roofs of these, hang glass bells, which are light enough to be moved by the least motion of the air, which they fill with Æolian sounds, that contrast to great advantage with the discord made by the abominable thumping of the Russian church bells.

Three bridges pass over the fissure, one at each end, and one in the middle. Those at the ends are merely for the convenience of crossing from one side of the gardens to the other; but that in the middle forms the base of a tastefully decorated building, in the same style as the rest, and reaching from side to side of the fissure, and containing a saloon in which the proprietor of the grounds holds his *soirées*, and gives balls in the summer-time. We entered this supra-aquatic edifice; but it was now shorn of its summer decorations, and as silent and gloomy as the desert.

The banks upon the outer side of the fissure, instead of being a rugged steep like the ground upon the inner side, form a slope, which is laid out in shrubberies more regularly planted than those upon the opposite side. Here also stands a pavilion in the same style as the rest, tastefully painted, and with windows of stained

glass, and containing a small library. From this, which is the most elegant of the fancy buildings, steps descend to the water at the bottom of the fissure, which was still not frozen. At the foot of the steps a beautiful Chinese boat was now lying afloat; and several fine black swans were seen sailing from bank to bank upon the still water, from which they were prevented from escaping by fenders of trellis work beneath the bridges, at the ends of the gardens.

After we had visited these mere objects of fancy, we were led to inspect some buildings and objects of a different character, among which were even four or five conservatories, and a menagerie. The contents of the conservatories deserve particular notice.

The collection of exotics was, indeed, such as would not have been a discredit to many of our ancient towns in Europe. Here, the myrtle, the fig-tree, the vine, the orange, the pine-apple, and the aloes, with the apple and pear, equally exotic in Siberia, were flourishing side by side; and, under the care of a Siberian gardener, they had attained as near approaches to the perfection of their nature, as they commonly attain in any other land of which they are not natives. At the larger of the buildings, a young pine-tree stood on either side of each of the doors without, like sentinels ready to resist the entrance of the great enemy Cold, within the asylum of the delicate strangers from more genial regions. Trees also of the same species, stood by the same doors within. These reached the glass roof, which they seemed about to force up, as if indignant at their imprisonment in their own clime.

The most remarkable in quality of all the fruits of the conservatories, were the pine-apples. About twenty of these, among several hundreds growing, were in a forward state, and several quite ripe; and Gospodin Garrockhoff informed us, that he commonly gathered

two or three a week, which my friend informed me sufficed to garnish the table at nearly all the *soirées* in the town.

The zoological department was not yet sufficiently advanced to afford the means of much amusement or study. The building for the reception of its future animate specimens now indeed contained only one enormous owl.

In the middle of the space in front of these buildings, just as we see sometimes in our pleasure-grounds, were placed a dial and compass upon the same stand, with a little brass cannon, which the sun, by means of burning glasses, discharged at noon.

After we had inspected all these objects, the proprietor led us along one of the paths upon the slopes on the broader side of the garden, till we came in sight of some specimens of Siberian sculpture which I had not before perceived, placed in favourable positions for effect. But here a little mistake occurred, which my friend and interpreter perceiving, rather maliciously promoted, by keeping a little in the rear, while the proprietor and myself conversed together as well as we could without having a good knowledge of a common tongue. As we proceeded, stopping at intervals to conduct our difficult discourse, some three or four semblances of animals were seen couched apart from one another among the dry grass and herbage that appeared above the snow that already covered the ground. Whether it were owing to any likeness they really bore to an animal in its animate condition, for which I mistook them, or that I was confounded by the character of the place, or that my mind was full of any other matter, it at least suggested itself to me the moment that I saw them, that they were some of the amphibious and wary tribe that sit and whine plaintively upon the ice in the frozen sea, and which had been

brought here for the menagerie, or to form the contrast between the plants of the torrid and the animals of the frozen zone, and had become tame, and were suffered to ramble about as they pleased; and I remarked, that I never saw any of the species so tame before. Gospodin Garrockhoff, perceiving immediately the mistake, at least as far as regarded the difference between stone and flesh and blood, and delighted with the apparent success of the artist in his imitation of nature, jocosely determined to keep me as long as possible in error; and he now observed, that he had heard that the animals generally, whether belonging or not to the properly domesticated tribes, were not so tame in other countries as in Siberia. To this, I answered, that I thought this disposition to tameness which he had observed here, would apply to all countries where the number of our own species was greatly disproportionate to the extent of territory which they inhabited, and that probably it was the immediate result of circumstances, rather than of any variation in the nature of the animals themselves. I believed, indeed, I added, that the disposition of most animals which we keep for food or for labour, was modified in proportion to our treatment of them, which was, necessarily, at all times more familiar, and often more humane, where we were ourselves less numerous; and that they generally received the contrary treatment from us, with contrary effects, where we were in the greatest numbers ourselves. I informed him, also, in proof of this, that it was certain that almost all the animals upon the American continent, in those latitudes at least where the climate resembles that of the country in which we now were, were observed to be as tame in their natural state, and, when domesticated, to possess the same docile disposition and aptitude to associate with, or receive the yoke of, their human masters, as those of

Siberia. I remarked, however, as we proceeded, that I never before saw any of this tribe so tame as these. "It is very strange," said the proprietor; "they are the tamest stock we have." But we were not yet even speaking of the same animal. "In Canada," I then said, as we approached still nearer to the objects of our conversation, "we should not have arrived within double this distance of them, before they would have rolled themselves down the bank, and jumped into the stream and disappeared." "This is still stranger," said the worthy proprietor, who was too much wrapt in his ecstasy at the success of the Siberian artist whom he patronised, in deceiving a European, to perceive that my error was two-fold; "then their nature must be very different from that of their species in Siberia."

We had not proceeded much further, however, before I began to mistrust my impressions, and to think by the stillness of the creatures that I seemed to perceive, that they were the work of the chisel, and not formed of flesh and blood. Not displeased, however, with the mistake which I appeared to have made, I was the less ready to be undeceived. At length, when they were too plain to be any longer mistaken for animate beings by any one in his right senses, wherever his thoughts might happen to be wandering, I closed my hands, and, in perfect confidence that I was now fully undeceived, exclaimed, "What an excellent specimen of art is here displayed! — upon my word I took them for real, living seals." At which the proprietor of the gardens, with much *naïvété*, but with how much disappointment I know not, exclaimed: "Gospodin! Gospodin! they were intended for sheep."

This somewhat awkward matter ended by Alcibiades arriving and making some amends for the mischief he had given the occasion for, by informing the liberal

patron of the arts, that in Europe we had few or none of the fat-tailed sheep, such as in effect these works of the chisel were designed to represent.

These were, by no means, all the curiosities in this way that were to be seen in the gardens, but they were the last that I made any such sad mistake about. I took care in future to keep possession of my friend, to whose aid I was much indebted in being able to comprehend what we afterwards examined. There were some lions in stone of the size of life, or somewhat larger. They had, indeed, quite human faces with the Mongolian expression. But as the sculptor had neither been in the countries which the king of the beasts inhabits, nor in those into which he is sometimes led captive, and, therefore, had not had the advantage of study from nature, such a want of exactness in the features of the face and the expression of the countenance might be easily pardoned.

But there were other specimens of the noble art, about which, unaided, I should have been much more embarrassed. These were copies, it is true, of such of nature's works as admit of considerable scope to the imagination of the sculptor, and had they been executed with the greatest truth, might not have been recognised, by even the zoologists of our schools. The learning, however, of Alcibiades enabled me to satisfy my curiosity concerning them. "You will recollect," said my friend, "that Herodotus informs us, that in the far countries in the north lie buried immeasurable treasures, guarded by griffins.* You are now, then, in that very country of which the 'father of history' spoke; and you have seen something of the treasures which the

* The Issedones affirm, that the country beyond them is inhabited by a race of men who have but one eye, and by griffins, who are guardians of the gold.—*Heloe's Berodotus*, Book iv.

world took to be fabulous, until the czars, after destroying the fierce animals that guarded them, opened the ground, and disclosed the precious store of minerals which it contains, and subjected the soil to human labour, and thereby taught the world henceforward to believe nothing to be fable that stimulates enterprise and promises equivalents for labour, and nothing whatever impossible."

What has been before said of the evidences found in Siberia of the existence, in some remote age, of a people occupied both in subterranean labour and in the cultivation of the soil, will be here remembered.

We now took leave of the enterprising millionnaire, and left the gardens — myself, I confess, impressed with the reality of the supposed modern discovery, how few things are impossible, of which these gardens were a fair example.

The next evening that I passed among the hospitable residents at Tomsk, was at the house of General Domitti. The general was a widower, and, therefore, there were no ladies at his *soirées.* The amusements were cards and conversation. Our host introduced me on this occasion to two sojourners for a season in the town, whose acquaintance I had not previously made. One of these was Professor Pschybylsky, the Polish gentleman engaged in geological researches in the country, whose politeness I have already acknowledged in aiding me in furnishing a preceding chapter upon the mines of the Ural Mountains. The other was the Marquis de Traversay, who was occupied with mining speculations. Professor Pschybylsky had been already three summers engaged in exploring the Altai Mountains along the line of division which they form between the Chinese and Russian Empires; and he intended spending two more occupied in the same manner. In

the meantime, he was engaged during the winters, in composing a work, which he intended publishing in French, and which, from the well-known capability of its author, will doubtless make a valuable addition to the scientific libraries of the world. He described the forests throughout the greater part of these mountains, from their western extremity to that portion of them which lies in the longitude of Tomsk, which he had explored, as being extremely fine, abounding in birch, beech, oak, and pine, and the several other firs of the country, and the soil as inconceivably fertile, more especially in the vicinity of Barnaoul. Between that town and the bounds of the empire, he found the country watered by a thousand streams, which are the sources of the three great branches of the Ob, and also of the main stream of the scarcely less mighty Yenessei. No doubt, therefore, when this district becomes peopled in the proportion of which its agricultural resources seem to warrant the expectation, it will form the garden of Siberia.

The marquis held privileges from the government in relation to mineral speculations throughout an unexplored district of the country. He had been three years in Siberia. During the first two of these, although personally engaged in the most arduous researches, he had discovered nothing to warrant the commencement of any establishment; but during the summer just passed, he had been more successful, and had been able to commence his proper operations; and he had brought with him from his newly-opened mine two pouds of gold, as the first fruits of the riches which he was in full expectation of acquiring.

The Marquis de Traversay was of French family, and was one of the existing monuments of the effects of the revolutions to which the distracted country of his fathers

seems to be for ever doomed. He now held the rank of admiral in the Russian navy; and he had seen as much service as his age and the times had admitted. He had commanded a frigate under Codrington at the battle of Navarino; and he spoke of the British admiral in terms of enthusiastic admiration, and said he intended visiting England as soon as it was in his power, on purpose to pay his respects to him. Some conversation passed about the battle, in which the marquis stated, that notwithstanding all that had been said in Europe concerning the immediate cause which had led to it, which he supposed had never been taken any notice of by our admiral, the real cause was the appearance of the Russian colours, which were no sooner seen by the Turks than they opened their fire; and thus the British admiral, merely because he was not disposed to allow himself to be pelted at without pelting in return, made the signal to close, and the battle became general.

The entertainments continued nightly at some one or other of the houses of the leading families of the inhabitants of Tomsk; and I went frequently to those of the general and the three millionnaires already mentioned. But the government house remained still closed, in consequence of the continued indisposition of the governor's lady.

It is not the custom at Tomsk to give any invitations. Those who lead in society have a day in the week fixed, on which their houses are open both for dinner and for the *soirée*, at one or both of which, every one who has once had a general invitation is expected. Music, cards, and conversation, and dancing whenever the younger sort muster sufficiently strong and are so disposed, are the ordinary amusements; and a supper always closes the evening. The expenditure and luxury,

though not on these occasions like that described at the house of Gospodin Astaschaff at the *fête* of his lady, are commonly very great. The rye-bread, beef, and cabbage, and *quass*, which are almost the only cheap articles in the way of food in Siberia, are for that very reason banished from the houses of the rich; and their place is supplied by wheaten bread of imported flour, as white as that of Paris or London, and the most delicate dishes of the rarer wild birds of the country preserved, and even meats and vegetables, which come from Europe hermetically sealed, and champagne, and the wines of Bordeaux, Oporto, Xeres, and Madeira. Often, indeed, even upon ordinary occasions, more than a case of sixty bottles of champagne is consumed during the evening, the price of which is twenty rubles assignat the bottle, or about seventeen shillings English.

As I was so frequently at the houses of the three millionnaires in particular, I may perhaps make a few more observations upon their princely establishments, without exceeding the limits that a due regard to propriety in such matters suggests.

Every thing within and without these houses, was upon a parallel scale, from the fitting up of the drawing-rooms with their several articles of luxury imported from St. Petersburg, to that of the kitchen, and even to the stables in which the noble animal so much abused by the peasant and *yemstchik*, has all the comforts that the most favoured of his race enjoy in Western Europe. I entered but one of the kitchens, which was that of Gospodin Philomonoff. Eighty-two servants and dependents were sitting at the table at dinner; and I was told, that sometimes there were about a hundred and twenty in the same house.

The provision made by the three proprietors of these houses for the instruction of their children, was

agreeable to the wants arising from the insulated position of their town, and commensurate with the arrangements throughout the different departments of their establishments. Gospodin Astaschaff, who had only a son, maintained an accomplished German gentleman in his house as tutor or *governor*, to apply the term equivalent to that in use here. Gospodin Philomonoff had daughters only, for whom he had a governess of the same nation; and Gospodin Garrockhoff, who had both sons and daughters, had a German lady and gentleman as governor and governess. Thus whatever the wants of the present generation, no fear can be entertained, that that which is to succeed will be full of all desirable knowledge, out of which it is to be hoped, will at least arise some reform in the present extravagant manner of living, which cannot be favourable either to the interests or the morals of the Siberians.

I shall here mention an act performed by one of these gentlemen a few days before I arrived, which filled the town with commendations, and subsequently furnished all Siberia, or at least all the parts of the country which it had time to reach, with a subject of conversation during the whole winter. The anecdote is highly illustrative of the Russian disposition generally. It was related to me by a gentleman who witnessed what he recounted; and the truth of what he related, I heard myself afterwards confirmed by the party concerned that was the least likely to exaggerate the circumstance.

There was a small party at the table of Gospodin Astaschaff, when the conversation turned to a discussion upon the inequality of fortunes, and upon the wonderful state of happiness to which riches were supposed to conduct, and the sufferings which attend poverty; and the governor in the family upon this occasion made this remark:—"Wealth," said he, "abstractedly con-

sidered, is a definite term: but as to individual riches, they are merely relative. Some are rich with less than the sum that others possess, and think themselves poor. The happiest estate is competence, or wealth proportionate to our accidental position, and resulting from our labour, provided we can frame our minds to contentment, when we ought so to do."

"And what would you yourself consider competence in your own case?" said Gospodin Astaschaff, in reply to this definition of the term.

"Why," replied the governor, "if I had a poud of gold, my contentment would be complete and my happiness would be perfect; for this would supply all the wants I can ever expect to have."

"Since that is all you require," then said Gospodin Astaschaff, "I make you a present of a poud of gold."

A few days after this, and while I was in the town, the poud of gold, in coined money, was handed to the governor by the lady of the generous donor. But whether the worthy man who received it, has ever since been contented and perfectly happy I am not able to say.

A few hundred yards from the house of this munificent proprietor of mines, resides a merchant of the old Russia school, engaged in the China trade, and possessing wealth supposed to be nearly equal to that of those who are employing their gold in the manner we have seen, but who lives buried in solitude amongst his dormant treasures, and is seldom seen beyond his threshold, and never in society. Once, however, he was pointed out to me in the street, walking with his eyes fixed on the ground, and dressed in a *schouba* that an artizan would have long before thrown aside.

Which may be the better of the two extremes in which the Russian character here appears, and of which the

extravagant expenditure in the houses of the proprietors of mines, is the effect of the one, and the avarice of the miser that of the other, and which the worst, abstractedly considered, may perhaps be doubtful. But, which is attended with the most happiness, and which productive of the greatest misery, both with regard to the possessors of the gold, and in relation to all that come within the vortex of its influence, cannot be difficult to determine.

CHAP. XXIV.

TOMSK.

Inhabitants preparing for Winter.—Change of Wheeled Carriages for Sledges.—Ordinary Time of setting in of Winter.—First Winter Promenade.—Fashionable World.—Costumes of different Classes.—Ladies.—Varieties of Sledges.—Sunday and Holiday Promenades.—Most approved Temperature for Promenading.—Care of the Ladies.—Character of the lesser Injuries by the Frost.—*Soirée* at the Government-house.—Amusements.—A Moscow Dandy.—His Travels and Opinions of Paris and London.—His Travels in Siberia.—Reflections of a Genius in Solitude concerning the Existence of Evil.—False Impressions of the Deity.—Relations of this Life to the next.—What a French Sovereign might do.—Apparent Inconsistencies in our Nature.

DURING the early days of my sojourn at Tomsk, all the inhabitants were busy in making preparations against the common enemy, the cold, and repairing or setting up their winter vehicles. In all the rooms in the houses at this season, are put double windows, and at the entrances from the streets or courts are put a second, and often a third door; and in all, save such substantial brick buildings as those which have been above-mentioned, the crevices throughout the houses are "chinced," or have strips of paper pasted over them; and many other little defensive works are also performed against the wily invader. In the meantime, the wheeled carriages of every denomination are abandoned for the *sani* or sledge, which national vehicle will not escape a particular notice in a future page.

Upon making inquiry, on our arrival at Tomsk, con-

cerning the weather that had been lately experienced in this part of the country, we found that some snow had fallen here about ten days before we arrived, but that it had lain only a short time upon the ground, and that the weather had been since as fine as we found it at the epoch of our arrival. This we heard also, was what was constantly experienced at this season, which agrees with the course of the climate and season in the eastern countries upon the North American continent, where the inhabitants call the short intervening space between the time of the first snow or cold, and the proper setting in of the winter, the "Indian Summer." The thermometer upon the day after our arrival was at two degrees above the zero of Réaumur at eight o'clock in the morning, and at eight degrees, with a cloudless sky and sunshine, at noon.

The first out-of-doors winter display of the people of Tomsk was on the 20th of October. The weather up to this time had been variable since our arrival. Sometimes it had been sufficiently cold to form a hard bottom, upon which the snow, which fell in considerable quantities, seemed set for the winter, when suddenly all again melted away. But the first simultaneous occurrence of bright sun, firm ground, calm, beaten snow, and a Sunday or *fête* day, fell this autumn upon this day, and all the world was abroad. The Tomsk dinner hour is at one o'clock; and before three the principal street exhibited all the parade of fashion, from the gay *sani* of the generals and the millionnaires, splendidly decorated, and drawn by European horses, down to those of the *bourgeoisie*, and the poor *chinovnik*, with a single horse and single occupant besides the *isvoshtchik*, for no one drives himself. Muffled up, beauty and military plumes in sledges of every description and degree of luxury, glided noiselessly along the snowy ways in sufficient numbers to give a stranger

a high impression of the wealth of the town, and a just idea of the manner in which it is employed.

I had set out with the intention of walking, and alone, but was unsuccessful in my attempt; for some one that I had scarcely seen before, picked me up, willing or not, before I had made a dozen steps; and I found myself at once mingled among the gay promenaders of the Siberian town.

The costume of the inhabitants is as various in winter as in summer, and is regulated by the rank, or fortune, or profession of the parties. The military officers never put off their plumed caps; but the civilians wear fur caps of all forms and at all costs. The rest of the dress of all classes that is seen, consists of a simple *schouba* or pelisse, of which the material that it is composed forms the distinction. All who aspire to the first rank must be dressed in sable when walking or driving in fine weather for pleasure, and in bear-skin when it is colder, or when they are travelling. But those whose ambition does not affect this rank, or whose means are more limited, are content to walk, drive, and travel in the colder weather in wolf-skins. The under *chinovnik* dress in black lamb-skins; and they suffer much when they travel, from not being able to obtain better clothing to protect them against the cold. In the meantime, the peasants, whose condition is usually much better, dress ordinarily in deer-skins, which are said to be the warmest of any skins whatsoever. And they certainly are so, in proportion to their weight and the space they occupy, though the fur of the bear and that also of the wolf are without doubt much warmer. The men of the lowest of all classes, the actual criminal exiles, and others who work during the summer in the mines, dress at this season in common sheep-skins.

The winter dress of the Siberians sits picturesquely upon the peasants, who draw their *schoubas* tight round

the waist with a scarf, but not upon men or women of any other class, owing to an absolute decree of fashion, which proscribes the girdle, and is obeyed by all except the peasants, by which the appearance of the dress is spoiled. Indeed, the *schouba* usually worn by all classes above the peasants, in walking, is made as ugly as can be imagined, by being put on with the sleeves, which it never wants, left dangling at the sides.

The peasant women wear precisely the same dress as the men, when abroad, save that a hood of the girdled *schouba* covers the head, instead of a fur cap.

The *schouba* of the ladies is a true cloak, in which, however, they very rarely walk. If a morning visit is to be made merely across the street, the *sani* conveys them. And when their acquaintance with those they visit is not familiar, or when the rank or fortune is disproportionate, the formalities and etiquette are as rigorous as at St. Petersburg or Moscow. The head-dress of the ladies without doors is the same as in the larger towns in Russia. The bonnet that is worn in summer is merely lined with fur for the winter.

The variety in the construction of the *sani* upon the gay occasion of which we are speaking, was such as to attract, in an especial manner, the attention of the stranger, who might have travelled upon snow in other countries. The form of the Siberian pleasure *sani*, is on several accounts inferior to that most approved of in Canada; but the *sani* used in travelling, as we shall have a better occasion to see, is much superior to the Canadian *cariole* or *slay*. The great length between the fore and hind wheels in the Siberian travelling carriage of summer has been noticed, and, true to the Russian character, the taste runs into the other extreme in the construction of the winter pleasure vehicles, at least. The *polozia*, or runners as they are called by the Canadians, which in the *sani* supply the place of the

wheels in a summer carriage, are too short, which causes them to sink the deeper into the snow when it is not hard. They rise also in front too abruptly, by reason of which they find the more resistance from every obstruction they meet. The vehicle is usually handsomely painted, and sometimes lined with fur, and otherwise comfortably accommodated. The wealthier of the ladies have close *sani* that resemble our close cabriolets, as far as the body of the vehicle is concerned.

Every Sunday or *fête* day after the winter has fairly commenced, unless the cold be excessive, the same display is to be seen. When the temperature, however, reaches to a degree that is dangerous to beauty, which is not wholly wanting in the fair sex of Tomsk, and when the cold is not yet so great as to confine the more adventurous of the ladies, it is necessary that the most prominent of the features of the face should be covered; for frost is as often a treacherous as an open enemy, and the hardiest might chance, upon the morning after an afternoon's drive, to rise minus a feature very essential to the beauty of the human countenance. Thus the thermometer, which hangs outside a window of almost every house, is usually consulted before the horses are ordered out; and if it indicate ten or more degrees of frost, the nose, at least, and often the mouth of the delicate promenaders, to assure their safety, must be concealed. My good friend who bore the name of the gay Athenian, and who was a bachelor, and a great admirer of beauty, informed me, that he always looked at his thermometer before he went out on these special occasions, that he might be at least prepared for disappointment; but that, nevertheless, even sometimes, when the mercury indicated a degree or two more than that which he called the ugly point, on account of its being that at which the muffling up of noses was recommended to the ladies, some of the

younger sort did not seem to perceive it. I found it necessary, however, on one of the occasions, when we were together, to caution him against being the possible cause of any such relaxation of common prudence among his country-women, some of whom I am sure we met unmuffled, with the thermometer at fifteen degrees of frost, lest upon some morning after the drive of the previous day, any one might be found wanting the feature that was supposed to be most susceptible of cold. It is proper to say, however, that upon all occasions a scalded or burnt face, as the effect of the frost, on account of its resemblance to that of fire, is appropriately called, is more common than any more serious accident. The ears indeed are always the most susceptible part of the body, and the cheek is frequently scalded before the nose.

It was not before several weeks after my arrival at Tomsk, that the governor's lady was sufficiently recovered from her indisposition to admit evening company. When it was known, however, that the Government-house was again thrown open, the first Sunday evening was very welcome to the good people of Tomsk, who assembled, as well to offer their congratulations upon the recovery of the lady, as for the ordinary enjoyments of the *soirée*.

Upon my making my appearance, I was introduced by the governor to his lady, who was seated in the middle room of three, including that of reception during the proper business hours of the day, and surrounded by parties offering their congratulations on her recovery; and I had the gratification of meeting in our hostess a lady of that degree of refinement to which station serves to give expression, but which it cannot improve.

After the luxury displayed in some of the houses I had previously visited, I was not able here to avoid regarding what otherwise would not have attracted my

attention. The rooms displayed good taste in the choice of decorations the most suitable to the position of the family and to the character of the country, and were at least equal in neatness and elegance to those of the houses among ourselves, which are arranged by our ladies, and accommodated to moderate fortunes. The Government-house, in fact, was a pattern which it were well for the morals and progress of the country, were it imitated by all the leading families and all the wealthy proprietors of mines throughout Siberia.

The amusements of the evening were similar to those at the other houses, which have been already mentioned, with the addition of chess, which I had not seen played before, but have reason to remember, from having had the confidence to sit down to a game with the governor, without knowing, until it was too late, that I was opposed to a mathematician of celebrity.

But there was a novelty, however, of another kind, which excited considerable curiosity among all the guests, in the form of a Moscow dandy, who had lately arrived. The good folks of Tomsk, although they may sometimes see the military uniform paraded with pride, and although they are ceremonious enough in their social intercourse, have not in the very richest circles, any among them who have contracted one atom of the attributes of the exquisite of the European towns. To those among them who had not travelled, or had been some time stationary, the sight of a fashionable man was quite a show. The object of our admiration was a young man of fine person, and a relative of the governor's family. When I first perceived him, he was occupying a whole divan, not from any desire to do so, but owing, as it plainly appeared, to a kind of terror, not easily defined, on the part of the rest of the guests, at approaching too near to so grand a personage; for the proof of his sociable disposition lay purring in his lap in the form of a large

Chinese fox-tailed, and baboon-faced cat, which he had just purchased for a hundred rubles, for the purpose of taking to Moscow, and which he stroked ever and anon very gently, without caring about dirtying his white kid gloves. I found, moreover, upon being introduced to the gentleman, as often turns out upon such occasions, that the properties of the dandy, which though they sat upon him very naturally, were only the external suit of manners and dress in which the real man was clothed; and which, at the age of ambition, when we court any thing that may distinguish us from the crowd of common men, do no more than indicate that lack of opportunity of engaging in the pursuit of something more worthy of distinctions has driven us to the tailor and the *modiste* to make us remarkable and admired.

The gentleman was a traveller. He had been at London and at Paris; and of these two capitals, like most of the continentals, he preferred Paris. When asked by a native of Tomsk, which was the superior of these wonderful capitals of the two rival kingdoms, as the Russians are wont to call England and France, his answer was I thought judicious and just. "They cannot," he said, "be put in comparison, for there is no similitude between them." Yet he thought London the most original town to be seen in Europe, and he much admired the cleanliness of its inhabitants generally. The taverns, which is the word the Russians generally use in speaking of what we now usually call hotels, he found very expensive and very gloomy; for, like most foreigners who sojourn in England, and are not acquainted with our language, of which he knew nothing, he was condemned to live in the very worst houses that could be chosen to give a just impression of the country and the people; and thus he went away, like many others, dissatisfied, and, probably, about as wise as he came. He gave us some account of his

journey from Moscow to Tomsk. He complained very much of his sufferings, owing to the quantity of furs in which he had been compelled to lie helplessly wrapped, and the difficulty of breathing through the mass of ice which continually collected about the aperture left for respiration around the mouth. He declared, moreover, that he would not go another step towards the east, for the wealth of all the mines in the department; and, indeed, he very soon after this departed, to retrace his steps, and return to his home in the ancient capital of Russia.

I cannot close this account of the inhabitants of this Siberian town, without one further little revelation concerning the life and opinions of the most singular of its inhabitants.

Very often during the tedious winter evenings at Tomsk, a party of boon companions would meet at the common apartment at Albinos' dwelling; and, sometimes they engaged in telling tales of the chase and of their adventures among the barbarous tribes inhabiting the wide wastes of the country, when they were in search of the gold deposits, and sometimes in playing cards; and among them occasionally appeared my good friend Alcibiades. Sometimes also, on these occasions I joined this party of Siberian rovers and others; and I may say, that when they were in a merry mood, never any where else have I seen men moved to mirth and laughter in an equal degree to that which my friend would move the whole company assembled. The discourse, however, and its effects, were lost to myself, on account of my want of acquaintance with the tongue through which the gibes, jests, flashes of wit, and other motives to merriment, met the ear. Sometimes, however, in my own apartment, when there were but few persons present, and when the discourse was of a different kind, and carried on in a tongue with which I was familiar, the

opinions which my friend expressed upon various subjects which it embraced, greatly interested me, as the result of the reflections of a cultivated mind amidst the desert, undisturbed by the turmoils which distract our thoughts amidst the quick succession of events and the scenes that are continually before our eyes in the populous countries of Europe. I shall however mention only one or two of such of his opinions as may best serve to show the course of thought natural to men left to contemplate almost alone amidst the solitudes of nature, in a land at once devoid of beauty of scenery, and of the works of art such as genius has brought forth in other countries, and in which every one may find perpetual subjects for admiration, for study, and for reflection.

The opinions that our alternately gay and grave philosopher expressed, which most attracted my attention by their seeming originality, were concerning the improvement of the social state generally among mankind, and concerning that great stumbling block to moral philosophers, the existence of evil, and, upon the relation of what passed in this life to that which we trust we shall enjoy hereafter.

Upon the first mentioned of these subjects, that of our social condition, he was of opinion that the imperfections in our institutions were in a great measure owing to the image which even good men, as a means of restraining vice, continually seek to impress, upon the minds of the multitude, concerning the Creator, upon whom, whether taught or untaught, all feel they depend and alone worship. He thought that by so frequently showing the Deity in his anger, and which was always in a picture so much clearer and more definite in allusion to the next state, than that in which his beneficence was made to appear, the spirits of men were depressed, their hearts hardened, and their disposition subjected to ill-temper

and moroseness, from which proceeded half those vices and errors among us, which no regulation of our social institutions could cure. Whereas he thought, that if the instructors of the multitude in all lands, under every system, would show that the true motives to a good life should be gratitude and not terror, and if they would dwell more upon the rewards of virtue, and upon the delight attending a good conscience, that all men in every condition of society would not only be better, but also more easily governed, and that all their institutions would proportionally improve.

On the other subjects, the existence of evil and our condition in a future world, he thought that a reasonable consideration concerning the connection of our occupations here, and those for which we were designed, at once explained the difficulty which so much embarrassed many reflecting men, and afforded the most definite and cheering prospect concerning the future. He was of opinion, that the occupations in which we should be engaged hereafter, would be such as required that we should, through one source or other, become impressed by experience, in a more or less lively manner, with the nature of evil, and its effects upon the constitution, character, and conduct of all sentient beings. But as to what those occupations would be, his opinions were, that science and the arts, as the only employments in which we engage here, that are not frivolous or degrading, and without enduring results, afforded us the best indication. These he believed to be the elements which we were permitted to become acquainted with, of the grand employments in which we should be hereafter engaged.

He made some observations at different times, upon the effects of Churches or communities upon the true spirit of Christianity, which he thought would increase, as the Churches of the several countries became distinct

from those of other countries under different forms of government. To the French he said he chiefly looked for the next great move in this particular. He was an admirer of that people, whom he thought the most ingenious and chivalrous in Europe; and he believed, that had Louis Philippe, who then reigned in France, kept up the same good intelligence with his clergy that was maintained by Napoleon, he might have imitated Peter the Great, and have freed the Church of France from its degrading dependence upon a foreign priesthood: and this example, he believed, on account of the influence of France in Europe, would have been followed by other nations, to the infinite benefit of the whole Christian family.

On one occasion, Alcibiades made several observations upon the difficulty he found in reconciling the apparent inconsistencies in our nature, but more especially in regard to the disproportion which there seemed to be between our physical and our intellectual attributes. "And I do not know," said he, "any example that we could take, that would more clearly illustrate this, than that afforded by your great natural philosopher, who discovered and explained many laws of the material universe, in which we do not perceive the imperfections that appear to belong to things more immediately around us. Let us then," he continued, "visit the philosopher in his study and his domicile. He is alive again, and seated in his observatory amidst the instruments of his power. He bids us look upon the sky, spangled with its myriads of circulating globes. He reveals to us all their movements and their relations to, and dependence upon, one another. What a compass of thought possesses us! 'What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In apprehension how like a God!' We go home impressed with the wonder, and exulting in the attributes of the

human soul. We are filled with hope. Our hearts are open, and gratitude and contentment wholly possess us. Our spirit seems released from the base earth, to which it has been chained till now. We are prepared to take our flight beyond the mean things of this world, to inhabit the land where we are appointed to rest for ever.

"But the next day we again visit the philosopher. It is the hour at which men are wont to take food to maintain their strength. The companions of Newton are assembled. Upon the table lie many pieces of our slain fellow-creatures of the irrational tribes. One of the guests is eating of the flesh of one animal, and another of another. What a piece of work, indeed, is man! How like is his nature to that of the fiercest beasts of the field! How humiliating the thought! Newton—the greatest of living men—is eating a pig!"

CHAP. XXV.

TOMSK.

Public and Private Baths.—Character.—Influence on the System. — Compared with the Turkish Bath. — Their general Use.—Appearances of the Bath-house.—Bathers.—Strange Ideas of Delicacy.— Temperature.—Description of the Process.—The Peasants' Method.

I SHALL in this chapter, give an account of a visit which I made to one of those houses of real luxury here to all classes that frequent them, and which, indeed, are to be found in every town save the very meanest, throughout Russia and Siberia, containing the public vapour baths.

Every body knows something of the baths of Turkey and other Eastern countries. The Russian bath is only a modification of that of the Turks, and was doubtless introduced by the Tatars, when their power was predominant and their customs prevailed in the fairer parts of the country. The effects of this bath are, a thorough cleansing of the whole material man, both externally and internally, by means of a copious infusion of pure vapour, and the discharge of the impure fluids of the body by means of profuse perspiration. The vapour is, in effect, made to penetrate the entire frame, from every portion of which it expels every unclean particle or latent humour, in whatsoever form it may be found, whether deposited by the grossness or the too great quantity of our viands or beverage, or resulting from obstructed perspiration or indolence. The sick man, where there is no organic disease, is by this bath

often made whole; and the sound man, overwrought with toil, is newly invigorated by its resistless influence. In the meantime, its effects upon the mind are scarcely less remarkable. It overpowers the spirits with intoxicating sensations, which, as they pass away, are found to have produced nearly the same effect that change of air and scene, and sometimes good news, produce upon the mind that has become weary with the same constant pursuit, or the same scene too long before the eyes, and is sickening without knowing why.

The purely Turkish bath is, when well applied, undoubtedly productive also, of all these effects; but the advantage of the Russian is, that we obtain equal or superior results, without any of the disagreeable pressings and pinchings that the Turks and Arabs administer while we are in the act of bathing.

It is no wonder, then, that this bath is considered by the Russians, as among the greatest luxuries they can enjoy; while it is happily not beyond the reach of the poorest of the people, since a few copeks is sufficient to obtain all its advantages.

Upon a bright moonlight night, on my first occasion of bathing, a friend drove me in his *sani* to the bath-house. The house itself, appeared a curious object to us, as we approached it. The roof was covered with sheets of ice, and enormous icicles were hanging from the projections at the bottom of the roof on every side, almost to the ground, and a vapour was oozing from all parts of the building, and rising, and condensing, and falling in fine snow. The whole seen indeed by the moonlight, presented the appearance of such a dwelling as the imagination bestows upon the gay immortals in Eastern tales, and which is well becoming the true restorer of exhausted bodily and mental vigour.

We had chosen Saturday evening, as that upon which the baths are more frequented, in order the better to

see their true character, and the manner of making use of them. Upon entering the general waiting-room, we found ourselves in an apartment, lighted only by a small lamp, which was dimly seen through a cloud of hot vapour that filled the whole space.

The bathing-rooms in all the public baths were, until very lately, common to both sexes; but by an order from the government, the sexes are now separated, and each has one large room apart. But this very commendable attempt to introduce a degree of delicacy unknown before, has not quite established the principle. In the general apartment into which we first entered, many of both sexes were waiting to enter two crowded bath-rooms; and the scene already presented sufficient proof that the letter of the order alone was yet complied with, or perhaps understood. About a dozen of the coarser sex were seen, dimly however through a dense mist, some passing to and fro, and others sitting upon benches by the walls, all quite in the independent state of nature, and, about as many of the fair sex in a condition almost equally independent, yet not ashamed, or apparently in the least degree conscious of any indelicacy whatsoever. We were, however, in an atmosphere in which clothes were scarcely supportable, and which made us soon put off the greater part of our own.

Habit reconciles us to almost every thing. Indeed, there was so much bustle and appearance of business in procuring tickets for admission into the bathing-rooms, from an attendant who stood within a counter, upon which a small lamp was burning, and with the entrances and exits of bathers and attendants, that the scene was more calculated to remind us of cases and positions in which we are sometimes placed by necessity, where the mind is too much occupied, perhaps by some work of charity, to leave room for niceness in its perceptions,

rather than presented the character which description is apt to impress.

After having cast off almost all our remaining clothes, which was absolutely necessary before we proceeded further in our investigations, both on account of the state of the atmosphere, and the dashing of water in all directions within the baths which we were about to enter, we were led by an attendant into an apartment full of bathers, where we found ourselves in an atmosphere at a temperature between forty and forty-five degrees of Réaumur, as the usual heat, and in the midst of figures still dimly seen through the mist, which was here doubly more dense than that in the outer chamber, and in such a scene of confusion, that it was not until we had nearly reached the termination of the long room, crowded with bathers on both sides, that we were aware of what now appeared -- that we were breaking the letter as well as the spirit of the new law, and parading about among the daughters instead of the sons of the land. Upon this discovery, however, we made our retreat.

We took after this, a little more minute survey of the apartments that it was lawful for us to enter. But instead of attempting any farther description of the scene within the common bathing-rooms, I shall state more exactly the manner in which the private bath which I took was administered; and when it is remembered that the same process is in action upon sixty or seventy bathers at the same time in the public bath, the scene there will be easily conceived.

We had not to leave the public bath-house to find private baths, there being several passing good within it; and we each now chose his own room, and entered, accompanied by an attendant, which is indispensable. In that which I chose, I found an anteroom used for the purpose of undressing. "Here I observed the thermo-

meter was at thirty-eight degrees of heat. But upon opening the door, and entering the proper bathing-room, where the temperature was at forty-seven degrees, I found the heat almost insupportable. At the moment of meeting this atmosphere, the respiration became sufficiently difficult to be slightly painful. But this effect of the sudden change passed away as the perspiration increased; and I afterwards felt no inconvenience when the heat was augmented to fifty degrees.

Upon one side of the room, two large wash-tubs were standing beneath two enormous metal cocks; and, upon the other, there was a stove fixed in the wall. The process commences by the bather placing himself standing in a shallow tub, which is filled by the attendant with water mixed to an agreeable temperature. The attendant then proceeds to pour quantities of water over the head of the bather, and next to rub his body with dried grass. After this has been a little while persevered in, the bather is placed, sitting, upon a bench; and the perspiration now runs down the body in streams. But the rubbing is still persevered in for about ten minutes longer. The next step is an exposure to the contrary extreme, which is not the most agreeable part of the process. It is now necessary for the bather to mount to a bench about four feet high; and while he is seated here, a bucket of icy cold water drawn from the second cock is dashed against his back. The effect of this is to start the whole vital frame, as if the electric spark had passed through the body, from which now proceed fresh floods of perspiration more profuse than ever.

The next step is scarcely less severe, and again in the opposite extreme. Water is now thrown into the metal stove, from which you are not far distant, and from which instantly rushes out a hot vapour with such force, that it is especially necessary to have the back turned to

receive it, and at the same time to shut the eyes. Lastly, the bather mounts to a bench considerably higher than that upon which he has hitherto been sitting, in search of still greater heat; and the attendant, now armed with a birch bough, on which the dried leaves are preserved for the purpose, proceeds to a thorough sweeping or brushing of the bather, rather than rubbing, which appears to apply friction enough to restore the circulation, which by this time has become languid, upon the outer parts of the body.

The bath being thus completed, the bather returns to the outer room of the two which he occupies, where, while he dresses himself, the attendant gradually lets in a little air, in order to lower the temperature sufficiently to prepare him to encounter the external atmosphere.

I shall mention here a common practice with the peasants at the baths, which, although we did not witness it upon this occasion, I frequently saw performed afterwards. It consists in substituting another means of producing the same effects as the dashing of the cold water above mentioned. The bather, incredible as it may appear, at the particular moment that the cold is required, rushes out of the bath and of the house, and plunges into the snow, and rolls about for a minute or two, and then suddenly re-enters the bath. This is even done when the cold is at the greatest which is experienced in the country; and it is esteemed by the peasants as the best and even the most agreeable way of passing through the cold water stage of the process.

These public baths are for the most part frequented by the peasants and inferior classes generally, as almost every good house is furnished with a private bath, nothing differing in principle from that above described.

CHAP. XXVI.

TOMSK.

Second Class of the People.—Artisans.—Demoralisation.—Causes.—Tatars excepted.—Criminal and Political Exiles.—Their Condition.—Employments of the Population.—Moral Consequences of the Gold Mines.—Effects in the Town.—Police.—Humiliating Scenes at the Prison.—Forgers discovered.—Domestic Servants.—Prejudice against new Faces sometimes pardonable.—Coolness of Murderers.—Battle between Russian Serfs and Siberians.—Scenes at the Council Chamber.—Enlightened President.—Religious Tolerance and Intolerance.—Murderer in the second Class of the People.—Thief elected to the Council Chamber.—Punishment of a Murderer.—Good Effects of Branding.

We have passed from house to house among the inhabitants of Tomsk of the superior class, and have seen such traits of manners and character as present themselves to the stranger both within and without their dwellings. We have now to regard the other classes of the population, in the light in which we shall have the opportunity of seeing them.

The second class of the inhabitants of Tomsk, according to our arbitrary division of the population in a previous chapter, is composed of the merchants of the second guild, the inferior officials of the mining companies, and a portion of the *chinovnik*. Little presents itself for remark concerning this class, that is not applicable to the same order among the Russians every where, and has not been, more especially in respect to the trading portion, sufficiently dwelt upon in the chapters upon Nijhni Novgorod. The merchants of the

second guild, it may nevertheless be repeated, are, I am persuaded, with exceptions (which are, indeed, generally found among the inhabitants of foreign origin), the least endowed with good consciences, of any of their class among any people of whom I have any knowledge. The agents of the companies, who do not belong to the first grade, and the *chinovnik*, who stand in the same relation to the higher classes of their order, are notorious alike for the irregularity of their lives, and generally, indeed, without those forcible reasons which spring from want of education, to excuse the errors for which society must hold them responsible, and which might be pleaded for the deficiencies of their trading fellow-citizens.

The *chinovnik* of this class proceed generally from the humbler classes of the people; but they have been provided by the government with sufficient education to enable them to make themselves respected. It is common to excuse them, at least for the venality for which they are remarkable, by the plea of their insufficient salaries; but their pay has been augmented during the present reign, for the purpose of removing this convenient pretext, without having produced any reform; and this, indeed, is but one of a number of faults which make up their character. The parental and filial ties are weak among them; and as to the conjugal, they too frequently exist only in law and in name. This class of men, indeed, live without having subjected one passion of our nature to that control over its tendency to excess, which is the distinguishing feature in the character of civilised man. So great a degeneracy of manners must be attributed to some more definite and less easily vanquished evil than poverty. Be the causes, however, what they may, a reform in the lives of so numerous a class in the service of the government would have great influence upon

those classes of the Russian people which appear to wait but the great redeemer Time, whose steps we do not always find tardy, to reclaim and refine them.

Many artisans and tradesmen who should properly belong to this class, being less under restraint than the dependents, whether upon the government or upon the proprietors of the mines, and having more means at their disposal, riot in all the excesses, and are addicted to all the vices, that belong to the most degraded state of society that can be imagined. It is even said among the Russians of the better classes, in other parts of the empire as well as in Siberia — and with truth I am persuaded — that just in proportion to the knowledge attained by this class of their fellow-subjects, is the amount of the corruption of manners and general demoralisation which their lives exhibit. Some of those in Siberia, are the descendants of the exiled refuse of Russia, and others are adventurers, who have often probably sought refuge from the scorn of their ultramontane brethren.

Where a state of society has not been attained, when the more intellectual entertainments of our European towns, such as the drama and lectures upon the different branches of knowledge, which by occasionally bringing the people of all classes under the same roof, tend to inspire them with a common respect for one another, the distance between the different classes must ever remain so great that the force of example, whenever it is found among the better orders, is wholly lost upon the inferior. Thus in Siberia, where the order next in consideration to the first, in our classification of the people, scarcely affords any examples worthy of imitation, it is not surprising that the demoralisation existing among the class with whom the worst criminals are associated, should be complete. The depravity, indeed, generally prevailing among this, the third and lowest

class of the inhabitants, is worse than is usually found among men living wholly without the advantages of civilised government.

But it is especially incumbent here to mention, that from all that has been said of the manners and morals of the different classes of the inhabitants of Tomsk, it must be understood, that the Tatar portion of the population is excepted. They cannot be put in any way in comparison with the Russo-Siberians. What has been said of the Tatars of Kazan, will in general be found equally applicable to those of Tomsk, and, indeed, to those in all other parts of the empire.

It will be as well, before dismissing the subject, to make a few remarks upon some local and more apparent causes than those above named, which have contributed to produce this widely-diffused demoralisation, and upon some of its immediate effects, with the inconveniences of which they are productive to the better classes of the population.

It is but a few years since the towns of Siberia and the villages in their vicinity afforded a tranquil resting-place for the exiles of every denomination. The political exiles, transferred from the populous towns of the empire, reposed here beyond the bounds of possible excitement, occupied, for the most part, in cultivating the land, and, if subdued in spirit by solitude and the monotony of their lives, still cherishing the hope of some day repassing the mountains. As to the criminal exiles, though their case was different as far as regarded their hopes of return, yet when they were once settled after the manner we have above seen, they may be said to have commenced a new existence, and to have entered upon a course of life that was capable of amelioration. If no hope, indeed, remained to them, of ever recrossing the mountains, they sat themselves down with minds at ease, and forgetting their former occupations, friends,

relations, and every thing that was connected with their lost homes, they engaged in such branches of agriculture as the climate admitted, and as were best adapted to supply their spare wants. They might have been transferred to another planet, and not have experienced a more thorough change in their lives than they now underwent. Even their offences were forgotten or forgiven. And as long as this state of things endured, and they were occupied with tilling the land, they were only distinguished from the rest of the inhabitants, composed of the descendants of exiles, *chinovnik*, and merchants, as well as in the official documents that concerned them, by the appellation of *Schastni Ludi*, the Unfortunates. Since the discovery, however, of many new mines, and the augmented amount of labour engaged in working them, this state of things is wholly changed. In the towns and villages upon the high roads, and every where near the vicinity of any of the mines, notwithstanding the commendable arrangements of the government respecting the working of them, a large proportion of the population is wholly maintained by the various employments incident to the extraction and transport of the precious metals; and the full effects of this change in their pursuits will be presently seen.

In the summer time, Tomsk is deserted by its able-bodied men, who seek occupation, chiefly at the mines upon the Yenessei. The labour at the mines generally, begins sooner or later in June, according to the season, and lasts until September; before the close of which month the proprietors are obliged by law to discharge all workmen and labourers whatsoever. The remuneration that the miners of every class receive for their labour during this short period, if they choose to save all they earn, is usually enough to maintain them with little or no labour during the rest of the year; and thus the town is filled during the winter with idlers that

become practised in every sort of vice. The strong arm indeed of the law, is not able to keep them from worse excesses than disgrace humanity among mere savages.

At the time of the breaking up of the summer labour, the roads for a season are infested with these rascals, many of whom riot at the villages on the road until they have spent and gambled away all they had earned during the entire summer. This of course leads to crime upon crime, and to murders especially. Upon the best information I could obtain, no less than forty bodies of these men murdered by some of the same gang to which they belonged, are picked up by the police upon the roads in the average of years, at this season, between the above-mentioned mines and Tomsk.

This will serve to give some idea of the state of the town during the winter. The police, however, is highly efficient, and this remark will apply to all the settlements throughout Siberia. As a proof of this, it may be mentioned, that at this time there were about 600 prisoners in the gaol at Tomsk for all sorts of crimes of which the law takes cognizance. Some of these were murderers, who had undergone their floggings, and now awaited transportation to the silver mines of Nertchinsk, the last punishment which the law can inflict. Three or four in the prison at this time, were such desperadoes, that they could not be trusted loose, even among their accomplices in crime, and were kept chained to the wall. Such a "taming *scene* to human pride," as this prison affords, all monarchs and all statesmen ought once to behold. The contemplation of our species in their state of nature, or under the worst of governments, affords no such useful lesson. It is amidst exhibitions such as this, that we are taught most forcibly the importance of education, and impressed most strongly with a sense of our duty towards those

who, with few motives to virtue, walk amidst the temptations to evil, which every degree even of civilised life affords.

I shall mention here an instance of the detection of offenders against the law, which took place while I was at Tomsk, in proof of the efficiency of the police in Siberia.

The genius for imitation, observed so strongly among the inferior classes of the Russians, has been before noticed; and we cannot be surprised to find instances of its perversion in Siberia. The chief of the police of Tomsk, had been some time in possession of several forged notes, and having cause to suspect the quarter whence they proceeded, he concealed himself in an apartment in the suspected house, and at night, crept out from under the table upon which the delinquents were engaged in forging new notes. The rogues, who were two exiles, were actually making the notes without the aid of any sort of machinery whatever, but with the mere use of an ordinary quill pen. I afterwards saw some that they had completed, which were each of the value of a silver ruble; and when they were side by side with the genuine notes of the government, not one among several persons present, could distinguish the difference between the true and the counterfeit. It may be mentioned here, as rather an uncommon circumstance in the monetary affairs of states or provinces, that paper is in this country so generally preferred to silver or gold, that it is not without difficulty that the authorities are able to get the coin that is sent from Russia put into circulation.

Great inconvenience, it is easy to perceive, must be suffered by the honest people of every class at Tomsk in all the relations they are compelled to have with their townsmen of the classes which perform for them any domestic or other services. I shall mention one or two

instances which came directly within my own observation, from which a fair idea may be gathered of what is experienced by those longer exposed to these inconveniences.

"Albinos," the quondam Englishman with whom I resided, and for whose name at Tomsk, it is believed, sufficient authority has been given to sanction its continued use, made frequent changes in his household; and I was never sorry when these took place, from a conviction that those who came could not be worse, and might be better, than those who went away. Some people have an objection to seeing new faces about them, and are ready to suffer great inconvenience to avoid this. No doubt every feeling that tends to dispose us to attach ourselves to our fellow-men, and more especially to those who serve us, is worthy of praise. But the ear does not so easily accustom itself to the voice, nor the eye to the features, of condemned felons, as to contemplate them patiently at all hours, even though the laws of society have been satisfied, and the church has absolved them; and no such objections to change of faces can obtain where the men who present themselves hourly to our eyes are necessarily such as these. Sometimes, indeed, when there is nothing positively revolting in the cast of a man's features who is constantly before us, we are apt, even towards the greatest criminal, to entertain the tender feelings of pity; and from this it is not impossible that even goodwill and attachment may proceed; but more especially if we are able to entertain hopes of the man being reformed. But when men attend upon us whose entrances and exits must be watched, and when we know that we cannot turn our back upon the servant that brings in our *samovar* without the danger of losing something, we can no longer restrain our contempt for men without the attributes of humanity which are pos-

sessed by the savage unacquainted with the blessings of civilised government and established laws; and we are compelled to place our fellow-men in our estimation beneath the quadruped that faithfully serves us to the utmost of his limited capacity: and this is the character of all those who serve at Tomsk, if we except some who are employed by the high officials, and the richer and more influential of the inhabitants.

Upon one occasion, after a change, just as our hopes were set upon two better-looking faces of a man and his wife than we had seen for some time, and while we were at dinner, an officer of the police arrived to carry them both off under the accusation of robbing their last employer. Nevertheless, such was the difficulty of getting any servants that promised any thing better, that after waiting upon ourselves for several days, both mine host and myself were reduced to the necessity of petitioning the authorities to let us have our thieves again, pending the trial. The answer to our demand was, that in consequence of the want of proof of the robbery of which they were accused they must be detained until the daily floggings which they received induced them to confess. After a day or two more, however, when the floggings brought but a firmer and firmer denial of the guilt of which they were accused, the authorities whom we had addressed, gave them leave to return to us to remain until sufficient proof of the robbery might be discovered.

But these were not the worst faces we had to look upon. I dare say there are few among those who have travelled much, who have not at some time or other been waited upon by thieves; and many have doubtless even "sat at good men's feasts" with worse than such petty rogues as would empty our pockets of the "trash that has been slave to thousands." But it was here my fortune, for the first time as I am bound to believe,

to be attended upon by murderers. No less than two such men were in our house, and served us at the same time; and so necessary were their services, and so common the circumstance in the good town of Tomsk, that we should have been sorry to have lost them on account of any too nice scruples about the matter. My worthy host, indeed, did not know when he engaged them, to which class of the "unfortunates" they belonged. They had suffered their scourging, branding, and transportation, and by the law and customs of society, they were now regarded as other ordinary rogues, and, like the rest, were freer than they were in Russia before their conviction. They might, indeed, have passed for mere whipped thieves, were it not that their shame was perpetuated, like that of the first murderer, by a mark that the Russian law sets upon the foreheads of these criminals. They had been engaged with their caps over their brows and over their temples, which were both marked, and mine host's eyes were not of the best. When the circumstance, however, of our having two actual murderers in the house became known, "Albinos" called them into our common apartment, and questioned them concerning the particulars of the sad events which the marks upon their foreheads and temples disclosed, hoping to hear some extenuating explanation. Their answers, however, were the reverse of this. One of them, in reply, said quite jocosely, that he was sent into Siberia for stealing a man's cap, which was of velvet and very tempting, without taking it off his head. He seemed, indeed, to be well satisfied with the notoriety he enjoyed. The other said very coolly, that he was one of several sent into exile for showing an old lady, who was their mistress, the shortest way to heaven, by strangling her while she was sleeping, upon a journey on which they were conducting her. They were her serfs, he also said, and they murdered her on account of

the severity with which she had treated them; but if they had been free, he added, they would not have done it. Yet it could not, he said, matter greatly; for she was old, and would not have lived much longer.

I wished to know how many such men there were in the town at the time; but I could obtain no certain information. It was supposed, however, that there were several hundred, all from Russia, the higher crimes of every sort committed here being punished by removal to the mines of Nertchinsk.

Though my worthy landlord thought little of being waited upon by such criminals, his feelings, as he informed me, had been more than once greatly outraged during a journey, upon finding he had been sitting at table in company with men stamped for their crimes, but whose foreheads had been covered by their caps when they sat down. He had, however, latterly, he said, made it a rule not to sit down in any house when travelling, until every one in the room had unbonneted.

While speaking of domestic matters at Tomsk, I must mention a little occurrence that took place at the time I was here, which will serve to show that even in the very best houses, into which the criminal exiles do not enter, the good inhabitants are not quite happy in this particular.

The marquis before mentioned, brought a troop of servants with him from Russia. They were his serfs; and he was considered to be the most fortunate in possessing them, of any one in the town. He was, however, living in the same house with the general, whose servants were chiefly proper colonists, the immediate descendants of exiles; and the two parties could not agree. The serfs thought themselves degraded in living in company with the descendants of exiles; and the colonists, who were of course free men, looked with contempt upon the serfs, on account of their state of

bondage. Thus both masters were occasionally troubled with the squabbles which arose out of this mutual contempt of their servants for each other. But upon a certain day, when both the general and the marquis were absent, the hostile parties came to a pitched battle; and the Russian serfs, being victors, drove the Siberians, after well thrashing them, into the streets. After this the masters were obliged to divide their domestic establishments, in order to separate their belligerent dependents.

But in order to show that even the highest crimes against society are not confined to the humbler grades of life in Siberia, and to give some idea of their proportion among the other classes, and of the degrees of indifference with which habit has brought them to be regarded here, two particular instances among many with which the traveller became acquainted, will be selected for notice, merely on account of the circumstances, independent of the crimes themselves, that at this moment gave them more than ordinary notoriety. But as the Anglo-Siberian with whom I resided will be mentioned in connection, not with the crimes, but with the circumstances which show the light in which they were regarded, and which gave them their present notoriety, it may be as well, first to report a short anecdote that was current here at this time concerning our quondam countryman's entrance into the council of Tomsk, and of which he had been some years a member when I was in Siberia.

The new Russian subject, having been elected a member of this body, upon the earliest occasion made his appearance to be sworn, in order to take his seat. This assembly is presided over in Siberia by an officer called *Goorurski Pravlayniz*, who performs also the duties of the military governor of the department during that officer's absence. The office was at present

filled by Alexander Nenagratski, whose name I feel pleasure in recording, on account of the transaction with which it is connected. The question, which is usual, was put before administering the oath, concerning the religion professed by the member elect, to which the new councillor replied: that he was of the English Church. Upon this, there was a general, and as this fact could not have been unknown to any one, probably a concerted, protest of disapprobation among the members of the Russian Church, whose tolerance we have so often seen occasion to admire; and doubts were expressed, whether they ought to take the oath of a member of some church, which, for any thing the Chamber knew to the contrary, might be heathen, or (which is always much worse in the minds of zealots) even heretical in their eyes. The *Goorurski Pravlayniz*, however, when he had heard all that the dissentient parties had to say upon the subject, asked the member elect, but in a manner little calculated to indicate doubts concerning the answer he might receive, or any fear of misapprehension of his meaning, whether he were a Christian; and when he had been answered in the affirmative, now addressing himself rather to the Chamber than the new member, he made these sententious remarks. "Whence," said he, "came all these Christian religions? There is but one God and one Bible; and all these varieties and forms must therefore be but different means of accommodating the same thing to the same end." And when no notice was taken of this speech, the *Goorurski Pravlayniz* proceeded to speak in a manner which I cannot but think worthy of being imitated by men playing a more influential part in the world's affairs. "Tell me," said he, addressing himself in a more particular manner to those members who appeared to be the most dissatisfied with the proposed admission of the stranger, "what is the difference between *Dominus* and *Gos-*

podin?" and when no one answered, he added, "why the difference is just the same as that between Church of England and Church of Russia; that is, between two terms to express the same thing, which is Religion. Take his oath!"

Reverting to the subject of which we were speaking: a friend called upon me one morning with the news of the day, which consisted of the report of what had just occurred within the council chamber of the municipal body, but which it is necessary to state, however, was not at the time presided over by the *Goorurski Pravlayniz* above mentioned. He recounted the incident as follows. Two newly-elected members, he said, had that day presented themselves to take the appointed oaths and their seats; and the permission for them to do this was stoutly opposed by my countryman. Whether Albinos had or had not been previously apprised of the election of these new members did not appear. But as soon as they stood before the body, he rose, and declared that he would not sit in company with men that not he alone, but every one present, knew could not be entitled to enter their chamber. But, before mentioning what followed, it is necessary to state who the elected members were.

These two men were both criminals that had been sent into exile for offences committed in Russia, but were more notorious for much greater, of which they were at least believed to be guilty, since their arrival in Siberia. They were both, whether by virtue of a pardon for the offences for which they had been exiled or not, I do not know, in the enjoyment of the rights of good Russian subjects. One of them was now building several brick houses, and was believed to be a man of considerable wealth. A year or two ago, however, this man had buried his wife; and in consequence of her death occurring very suddenly, suspicions had been en-

tertained that there was something more than natural in the event; and he had been called upon by the authorities to give some account of the manner of her death. He had some story of suicide ready; but his tale not only obtained no credit, but appeared to be so clumsily invented, that it even strengthened the suspicions; and an order was given to disinter the body and subject it to examination. Upon this taking place, not only was it found that there was a large quantity of arsenic in the stomach of the deceased, but also, that the body had received several wounds which were certainly inflicted by a knife or dagger. Either of these causes, it was proved, was sufficient to have occasioned death; yet still there was no proof of either who gave the wounds or who administered the poison. It was even found that the mouth of the deceased was injured in a manner which seemed to indicate that the poison had been administered by violence; which, more positively than the rest of the evidence, contradicted the only plea set up by the accused, that the deceased had poisoned herself. Nevertheless, the laws of Russia, requiring direct evidence or confession, and these not appearing, the party, as occurs in many cases, was left an evil example to criminals to come.

The other of the members elect was a thief, whom Albinos had kicked out of his house on account of his wanting the fingers of one hand, which had been chopped off by a traveller with his tomahawk while quietly seated in a *sąni* which the rogue had attempted to rob on the road.

Such were the men who now presented themselves to sit with the councillors of the civic chamber. No doubt all the honest men of the body immediately approved of the opposition made to their election. Nevertheless, quirks arose, and law and formalities were

spoken of, and other causes of hesitation, until these so warmed the spirit of Albinos, that he tore up his copy of a paper that was before the council at the time, threw the shreds into the midst of the chamber, and ran off in an honest huff, declaring he would not sit to hear a company he respected even deliberate upon such a question. It is proper to add, however, that the slumbering sense of honour in the civic body was awakened by this scene, and that the criminals were thrust from the chamber in a manner that did some credit to the members of which the body was composed.

While I was at Tomsk, I had the opportunity of witnessing the execution of the extreme punishment that, by the laws of Russia, is ever inflicted upon any criminal. A short account of the sad spectacle, will serve to complete the reverse side to that with which we began this little moral picture of the first Siberian town in which the traveller's sojourn afforded the occasion of making any observation upon the condition and character of the people.

But though the criminal law in Russia never condemns any one to death, I believe it is considered, that about two-fifths of those who receive the full number of lashes of the *plette*, or scourge, lately substituted for the *knout*, and less severe than that ancient instrument of punishment, succumb under the hands of the executioner, or die shortly afterwards, or, as it sometimes happens, at the end of several weeks. The criminal whom I saw undergo his punishment was a murderer. He had murdered his employer in this town, after robbing him, and in cold blood. There was no extenuating circumstance connected with his guilt; but, on the contrary, it was known by his own confession that this was the fifth murder that he had committed since his residence of a few years in Tomsk and its vicinity; and

he was sentenced to receive a hundred lashes, and to be branded both on the forehead and the temples.

A formal procession, which has been adopted, also in obedience to a new regulation, preceded the execution of the sentence. The wretched man was drawn through the streets to the market-place upon a high car, escorted by a mounted and foot-guard, and preceded by drummers, whose instruments announced the approach of the procession. He was seated, with his back to the horses, against a board, and with a chain round his waist; and upon his chest hung a board suspended from his neck, upon which was written in capital letters the word *Oobutza* (murderer).

Upon the spot appointed for the execution of the sentence, was erected a platform, with a railing and steps to ascend to it. Upon this lay an inclined plane adapted in dimensions to receive the criminal extended; and by this stood a tall stake, resembling that upon which martyrs as well as criminals formerly suffered in many Christian lands. When the procession arrived at the place of punishment, the murderer was unbound, and brought down from the car, and placed standing against the front of the platform, to await the arrival of the judge, whose duty it is to read the sentence at the place of its execution, and the officer that we should call the sheriff, the confessor, and the doctor. But neither, however, can the judge change the sentence, nor the doctor under any circumstances arrest its execution. A full hour passed before these officers made their appearance; during which time the criminal remained in the same position, and the executioner stood ready upon the platform. At length the judge, and the officer that represented our sheriff, came with some show of ceremony, and on horseback. As soon as they arrived they alighted, and the judge produced the written sentence, and commenced reading it uncovered; and the people generally,

who were probably in number about two hundred, doffed their caps also.

At this moment, however, a little farce was acted that it is a pity should at any time be suffered to break the sad solemnity of such an occasion. Some dozen, perhaps, of the persons present had neglected, unquestionably by inadvertence, to remove their caps; and while the judge continued reading aloud in precisely the tone, as I could not help remarking, that the churchmen gabble their Sclavonic prayers, some soldiers after pressing into the crowd from behind on all sides, without any warning, snatched the caps from the heads of all those who had remained covered, and threw them upon the platform; which strange proceeding produced, of course, in all those whose temperament was not of the severest, the most unseemly merriment.

When the reading of the sentence was concluded, the criminal threw a handkerchief upon the ground, which it appeared was to solicit copeks from any charitable persons that might be present, to aid his recovery, should he not expire under the hands of the executioner, which was, however, expected, since he was to receive above the number of lashes considered upon the average to be that at which human sufferings cease. Nevertheless, he had in his favour a powerful and hardy frame. He appeared about forty years of age, and was of the middle size. His countenance was of that remarkably fine open character, that it was difficult to conceive could cover a mind into which a murderous thought had ever entered. Had, indeed, any one present not known where he stood, he might have thought he looked upon a martyr instead of the worst of criminals.

The executioner, who was himself a criminal, pardoned, according to the usage in Russia, upon his ac-

ceptance of the office he bore, had been all this time standing alone upon the platform; and he was the more conspicuous from being dressed in a handsome caftan. He now descended, and, with the assistance of a soldier, conducted the criminal, by the steps, to the platform. Here, he first bound him to the stake, but only to remain about ten minutes, apparently to give the spectators the opportunity of comparing his appearance before and after the execution of the sentence. From this the unhappy man was now removed; and the executioner, assisted by two soldiers, bound him to the inclined plane, with his head so drawn down beyond the upper edge of the frame, that it appeared as if it were impossible that he could escape suffocation.

The soldier now retired; and the executioner, after taking off his caftan, opened a chest that lay upon the platform, took out his fearful weapon, and then measuring the ground with his steps, placed himself in a favourable attitude to exert all his strength, and now stepping one foot forward with the exactness of a soldier on drill, gave the first terrible stroke. The scourge cut deep into the flesh. The blood spouted out, and the criminal's whole frame quivered as he uttered a most piercing cry.

The executioner continued his strokes at intervals of about half a minute, while a soldier below called out their numbers as they were given. Whether the manner in which the executioner performed his office was any refinement of his own, or regulated by the letter of duty, I did not hear; but the attitudes which he took, and the formality with which he continually wiped the blood from the tails of the scourge, and arranged these to do the most execution, could not fail to excite disgust in the most frigid; and had the offences of the sufferer been any thing less than five murders,

might have produced sympathy and pity for his sufferings.

After the fiftieth stroke, when the criminal's back was but a mere mass of raw and mangled flesh, with the blood running in a stream on either side of the board upon which he was bound, the executioner exchanged his gory scourge for a fresh one, with which he continued the operation with the same effect, and answered by the same cries, until the soldier called a hundred, when this part of the sentence was accomplished.

Preparations were now made for the branding. The arms and legs of the murderer were unbound, and the plane, upon which he still lay, which rested upon hinges at the feet, was placed in nearly an upright position. The executioner then produced his brand; and while the head of the criminal was held by the soldier, he placed the instrument upon the wretched man's forehead; and after giving it two strokes with his open hand, he covered the wound which it made with some indelible tincture; and after this he stamped both temples in a similar manner.

The murderer had his feet now unbound, and a trial was made whether he could walk; but as he was not able to stand, he was carried down the steps of the platform; and just as he reached the ground he appeared to be expiring. But some charitable person that was by, hastened to rub his face with some forcible restorative, and he presently revived. He was now thrown into a cart filled with straw, and conveyed back to the prison to await death, or his sufficient recovery to admit of his being sent to labour in the mines of Nertchinsk for the remainder of his days.

I must, in relation to the criminal law of Russia, here mention, that in the opinion of several sensible Russians with whom I conversed, the certainty of death, which the people of the peasant class of the country dread

more than men of the corresponding class in most countries, was the sole means to check the commission of the highest crime against society, which is of so common occurrence, at least in this part of the empire.

I shall venture to make a remark here concerning the advantage we might derive from introducing a part of the Russian penalty for this class of criminals among ourselves, in the event of our abolishing capital punishments. It has been ascertained, I believe, that since the abolition of the punishment of death in England for some inferior offences, these have considerably increased. If this be so, we may be far from that period at which the change sought to be introduced into the law, can be with a prospect of advantage by any means made. Whenever it may, however, prove otherwise, it will be worth the consideration of legislators, whether the branding, superadded to any other punishment that might be substituted for that of death, might not be at once a security to the public against the escape of the criminal from the confinement which it must be taken for granted he would be condemned to endure, and what is more than this, assure the wretch into whose mind the suggestions of murder had entered, of the certainty of his perpetual shame. He might hope to escape from prison, but never to erase the mark from his brow. No doubt it has not failed to occur to the minds of those who have more fully considered this subject, that we read, that "the Lord set a mark upon" the first man who committed the crime of which we are speaking.

CHAP. XXVII.

TOMSK.

Remarks upon the Cold.—Quantity of Snow.—Variations in the Temperature.—Comfort in-doors.—Means of guarding against the Cold.—The *Amossor*, or *Calorifère*.—Small Expenditure of Wood.—Remarkable Effects of the *Amossor*.—Dangerous if carelessly managed.—Usual Temperature.—Experiments upon the Mercury.—Arrangements for quitting Tomsk.—Excess of Cold.—Variations.—My former Companions.—Fellow-travellers.—Departure.—Meteorological Table, with Remarks.

I SHALL here make a few additional remarks upon the temperature of the atmosphere, and of the state of the weather during my stay in this part of Siberia, and upon the methods employed by the Siberians for defending themselves against the degrees of cold which they experience.

From the 24th of September, on which day I arrived in this town, for three weeks the weather was extremely variable, very often thawing during the day, but always freezing again at night, there being sometimes within the twenty-four hours a variation of from 8 to 10 degrees of Réaumur. Thus, although the thermometer had frequently indicated as much as 6 or 7 degrees of frost, yet as it thawed during the middle of the day upon the 16th, 17th, and 18th of October, the winter was not considered to be established until that epoch. These were however the last days of the sun's sensible influence, as will be shown by the register of the state of the thermometer at the end of this chapter.

When there is about 10 degrees of frost, the weather

is considered to be agreeable and wholesome at any time during the winter, and does not, as before stated, unless there be a strong wind, retain those within doors, who desire to drive out for mere amusement and the enjoyment of the open air. But though this degree of cold, with moderate care, is not attended with any danger or inconvenience, yet, with every degree beyond this, more and more caution becomes necessary. And if the cold exceeds the point at which the mercury freezes, or about 29 of Réaumur, and which is not an uncommon degree of cold during the depth of winter, it is then both inconvenient and dangerous, and must be regarded as a real enemy.

It will be observed by the register, that on the 29th day of October, which was not more than ten days after the last sensible influence of the sun's rays had been seen upon the snow, the thermometer had fallen to 17 degrees of frost, and that the cold again gradually decreased until the 3rd of November, when there was but 1 degree of frost, and that, on the day after this, there was again 17 degrees. The only inconvenience however, occasioned by the weather, arose from the quantity of snow that had accumulated in the streets and about the houses. There were no means of ascertaining exactly the quantity that had fallen, as it had always been accompanied with high winds, and had drifted into heaps and literally filled up all the enclosures between the buildings. The quantity indeed gathered around our dwelling, was so great during all November and December, that we had constantly a horse and cart and two men occupied in keeping the communication open between the different buildings belonging to, but detached from, the dwelling-house. Every one is obliged to clear the front of his house of this encumbrance as it collects in the streets, and to cast it into the river or the ravine which runs through the

town. Thus, the streets too were continually full of men similarly engaged.

After some further oscillations of the thermometer, on the 12th of November the cold reached 30 degrees; and, although the change had not been sudden, from some accidental neglect in attending to the fires at the prison, two men confined there were that morning found frozen to death.

On the 25th of November, it will be seen, the temperature had risen to 3 degrees of frost, but it again sank to 20 on the following day. After this, it generally oscillated between 10 and 20 degrees until the 7th of December, when it fell to 40 degrees.

Within doors, every inconvenience that we might expect to encounter in this climate, has here been striven with and overcome; and probably, in no country on earth is cold less felt than in Siberia, except when we are by necessity exposed to its influence without doors. The beau puts on his white kid gloves and dress shoes, and the belle her satin shoes and silk gloves, before leaving home to attend the dance, in winter as in summer. Slipping their feet into a pair of loose boots furred within, and wrapping round them a *schouba*, they glide from the heated air of the inner rooms, through two or perhaps three doors, jump into their *sani*, and are again in an atmosphere of the same temperature as that which they left, before they perceive any other effects of the cold, than the gathering of ice about every thing round the face, by the freezing of the damp air they breathe, upon the first object with which it comes in contact.

Most dwellings of ordinary dimension, of one story, and containing four rooms, and even dwellings of two stories, and containing eight or more rooms, are warmed by means of a single fire, from which every degree of heat may be distributed through the entire building

with a surprisingly small expenditure of wood. This is accomplished, by heating a mass of brick or stone work, upon the same principle as that already seen in the houses of the peasants, but without the oven, the cooking in the towns being almost always done in a separate building. This essential portion of every dwelling whatever in Siberia, is usually called by the Russians after the name of its inventor, an *amossor*, and sometimes by the politer sort when speaking French, of a *calorifère*, though it does not much resemble the great stove which has received that appellation in France.

The *amossor*, as it is better we should term it, ought to bear a due proportion to the dwelling, and is placed in the centre of it, and made to form a portion of the walls of every one of the rooms. It has a chamber left for the wood, resembling the proper oven before mentioned, but much smaller, and bearing, indeed, a very small proportion to the enormous thickness of the walls of brick or stone work. To this, there is a door in one of the rooms upon the ground floor; and near the inner end of the roof of the chamber, a narrow chimney or passage leads upwards through the mass of the *amossor*. In the chamber the fire is made. And by closing the door, and leaving a narrow hole open, a draught is created, which produces heat enough to warm the whole mass, which, provided it be not the first time of lighting, is accomplished in about an hour, with a mere double armful of wood, by which the house may be now thoroughly heated throughout. As soon as the wood is entirely burnt, care must be taken that the least flame whatever does not still burn, though the embers may remain red hot; and the door is now closed, and the chimney stopped by a convenient contrivance, by which all communication is cut off with the external air. The heated air is now concentrated within the interior of

the *amossor*, and having no other passage, finds its way by distinct apertures to the several rooms, into which the quantity required is let through a valve, and may be regulated at pleasure.

The *amossor* when lighted for the first time at the commencement of the cold season, takes from thirty-six to forty-eight hours to get thoroughly heated. After this, it is kept hot through the winter by being lighted for an hour once every day, in the manner above described.

In some houses the fire is lighted in the evening, and in others in the morning. The evening is generally considered the best, on account of the change of the air being more desirable for the night than for the day. The rooms are also then cooler for some hours; for it is remarkable that the full heat of the *amossor* is not thrown out until about eight hours after extinguishing the fire. Thus, by lighting in the evening, we have the highest temperature to proportion as we wish in the morning. When the attendants, however, are not to be fully depended upon, lighting in the evening is dangerous, as, in case of the chimney being closed, before the flame of the fire is completely burnt out, *asphyxy*, or temporary, and sometimes perpetual suspension of animation takes place. My plan for some time was, to light in the evening, on account of the advantage of sleeping in the fresher air. Some restless nights, and certain noises in the ears and headaches by day, however, at a time I was living alone in another part of Siberia during the winter, caused me to discover that my servant, who did not sleep in the house, wishing to get away early, had thought the consequences that he knew very well his negligence might occasion, of less importance than half an hour's time, which would have saved this inconvenience and the risk; after which I had my stove lighted in the morning.

Great care, nevertheless, is usually taken in all that concerns the heating of the *amossor*, and the distribution of the warmth throughout the house. In the larger houses of the wealthy, there is a servant kept, and in some even more than one, expressly to attend the fires.

The temperature kept up within the rooms of the Russo-Siberians is usually about 15 degrees of heat, though many indulge in 17, 18, and even 20 degrees or 77 of Fahrenheit. The aborigines, however, it will, by and by be shown, cannot live in heat so great as even the lowest above mentioned.

During the severe weather, or when the thermometer is at or near 30 degrees of cold out of doors, a curious phenomenon is observed whenever the outer door of the house is opened upon an apartment into which the hot air has penetrated. As the air from without comes in contact with the heated air, it produces a dense atmosphere, which seems to rush in like a thick mist. And when the hall happens to be artificially lighted, the appearance is like that of a brilliant vapour, which however falls almost immediately to the ground either in water or fine snow.

I called upon a friend early one morning, after a conversation on the previous evening concerning the cold, to see an experiment which he had promised to make, to show its effects upon mercury when at a very low temperature. My friend now brought out into the yard a small cup containing several ounces of the mineral in its liquid form. This he poured upon the head of a cask, where it gradually congealed, until in about three minutes it had frozen and become as hard as a rock. Upon this, the experimentalist took a hammer and beat it into powder as fine as, and very much resembling, wheaten flour. While in this form, it was now scraped up and replaced in the cup, and brought again into a room at the usual temperature of about 15 degrees of heat, where, in

less than a minute, it reassumed its liquid form. What the exact degree of cold was when this experiment was made, we were not able to tell, as there was no spirit thermometer in the house; but we found afterwards, that the thermometer at the governor's indicated 36 degrees of frost at nearly the same hour.

It had originally been my intention to leave Tomsk, upon my journey into Eastern Siberia, very soon after the firm establishment of the snow ways. Several causes of detention, however, presented themselves, and which I was the less solicitous of overcoming, on account of the agreeable society which the government house, and the houses of the general and the proprietors of the mines, and those of some of my other good friends, afforded. The foremost of the causes that detained me was the want of an interpreter and servant, which my spare knowledge of the Russian language seemed to render almost indispensable. This want, however, I found impossible to supply. Nor was there any probability of my finding any one for some time travelling the same way, from whom I might expect any aid. However, I ultimately determined upon making the journey as far as Krasnoyarsk, which should occupy about three days, with the government courier, who departed weekly, and regularly when no obstruction arose from the state of the weather, or from the detention of the mail from Russia, with which he proceeded. I should at least by this arrangement have some experience of that mode of travelling. My gay companion so frequently mentioned, had left the town some time since for the mines upon the Yenessei.

The day I first fixed upon for my departure was the 8th December. But on that day the mercury was frozen; and upon my calling on some of my friends to take a last leave of their families, I found the degree of cold reported to be forty, which it will

be seen, by reference to the register, did not far exceed the truth; and as this is a degree at which no one, not under the most absolute necessity, ever at least commences a journey, and as the courier's *sani* was not well accommodated, and this was to be my first experience in travelling by this means in this part of the world, I was induced to postpone my departure.

On the 13th, the thermometer had gone down even to 8 degrees; after which it varied daily between 10 and 22 degrees until the 23rd of the same month; upon which day I left Tomsk, with no greater cold than that agreeable degree at which the ladies refrain from covering their faces when in the open air.

On the morning of my departure, the courier came to bring me the acceptable intelligence, that I was to have two travelling companions. The *sani* was properly adapted for two travellers only, who sat or reclined together with the courier; but in order to accommodate a third, the official had determined, favoured in his design by the state of the weather, to place himself side by side with the *yemstchik*, or upon the cover that protected the feet and legs of the other travellers.

My arrangements being made, I now took a final leave of my good friends at the houses I had most frequented, and of the two amiable ladies of St. Petersburg, with whom I had conversed almost daily in my native tongue.

But I must not omit on this occasion to make a last mention of my companions of the former journey, both of whom I left established in their proper vocations. The merchant had commenced a retail trade in all the articles of merchandise imported into the country, and he expressed his contentment at his prospects of success; and as to the professor, nothing could have exceeded his good fortune; for he had scarcely arrived when the governor himself engaged him in his family. And I heard from the best authority, that he had gained more

control than he had formerly had over his love of champagne. And if he was not so gay as the merchant and myself had found him at Ikaterinburg, he was not so dull as when we were upon our journey to Tomsk.

The time appointed for our departure was near three in the afternoon, an hour before which, the travellers were assembled at the post office, awaiting the preparation of the mails, and, with the aid of the courier and the *yemstchik*, engaged in preparing the interior of the *sani* for the journey. We were provided with portable beds and other necessaries, in the same manner that the *tarantass* had been furnished on a former occasion; so that, save our being independent of one another, our *ménage* was much the same as that of the three travellers of the last journey, when they launched out upon the great Siberian steppe.

The travellers that were to be now my companions proved to be agents in the service of some of the mining proprietors. The courier introduced the parties to one another in due form. My first impression upon making their acquaintance was not very favourable. A friend, too, who came to see us off, discovered that they had been rioting all the preceding night and all the morning; and after he had conversed with them, he could not encourage me to entertain much hopes of finding them more agreeable company when the effects of their excess had quite passed away. It was true, that whatever might be their disposition towards sociability, we had not enough of any common tongue between us, to admit of our exceeding the narrowest limits of discourse. Yet it is wonderful how much may sometimes be done with a very few words and expressions of a language, when there is necessity or strong desire on the side of a stranger in the land, and good will and some intelligence on the side of the natives. And it was not the first time that I had been placed in the position of the former, and I

had never yet in Russia failed to meet the desired qualifications of the latter.

Every thing being ready for our departure, we received the word from the courier to take our seats in the *sani;* and as we placed ourselves in his vehicle, he seated himself upon a solid portion of the covering over our feet. The *yemstchik,* who had already mounted, now smacked his whip; and with three horses abreast, we dashed down the hill upon the brow of which the post office stood; and after passing at full speed through the town, we were soon amidst the solitudes of the Siberian plain.

METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL KEPT AT TOMSK FROM SEPTEMBER THE 25TH TO DECEMBER THE 23RD.

Date	At 8 A. M.	State of the Weather.
	Degrees.	
September 25	Frost 2	Fine clear weather. Wind N. W.
26	„ 1	Ditto.
27	Heat 1	Ditto.
28	„ 3	Ditto.
29	Frost 2	Ditto.
30	„ 5	Snow. Wind S. W.
October 1	„ 6	Clear weather, calm.
2	„ 3	Ditto.
3	„ 7	Ditto.
4	„ 5	Ditto.
5	„ 3	Snow. Wind S. W.
6	„ 1	Ditto.
7	„ 0	Thawing during the middle of the day.
8	„ 1	Ditto.
9	Heat 1	Ditto.
10	„ 2	Ditto.
11	Frost 1	Ditto.
12	„ 3	Clear and cold. Wind N. W.
13	„ 5	Ditto. N. E.
14	„ 4	Ditto. N.
15	„ 3	Ditto.
16	„ 1	Ditto.
17	„ 0	Ditto.
18	„ 3	Snow. Wind S. W.
19	„ 6	Ditto.
20	„ 4	Clear. N. W.

METEOROLOGICAL TABLE—*continued.*

Date.	At 8 A. M.	State of the Weather.
	Degrees.	
October 21	Frost 5	Clear. Wind N.W.
22	„ 7	Ditto. N.W.
23	„ 8	Calm.
24	„ 6	Ditto.
25	„ 5	Ditto. Wind N.
26	„ 11	Ditto. N.
27	„ 10	Ditto. N.N.W.
28	„ 7	Snow. S.W.
29	„ 17	Calm.
30	„ 15	Ditto.
31	„ 10	Ditto.
November 1	„ 10	Ditto. Wind W.
2	„ 3	Snow.
3	„ 1	Clear.
4	„ 17	Ditto. Wind N.W.
5	„ 10	Calm. Cloudy.
6	„ 6	Ditto. Wind N.
7	„ 2	Ditto. S.W.
8	„ 1	Ditto. S.W.
9	Heat 2	Clear. S.
10	Frost 24	Calm. N.
11	„ 28	Ditto. N.
12	„ 30	Two men frozen to death in the prison.
13	„ 24	Calm.
14	„ 30	Ditto.
15	„ 26	Ditto.
16	„ 8	Ditto. Wind N.W.
17	„ 5	Ditto. W.
18	„ 2	Snow. S.W.
19	„ 6	Cloudy. S.W.
20	„ 10	Ditto. N.W.
21	„ 21	Clear. N.
22	„ 16	Ditto. N.
23	„ 10	Ditto. N.
24	„ 11	Cloudy. N.E.
25	„ 3	Snow. S.W.
26	„ 20	Clear. N.N.W.
27	„ 18	Ditto. N.W.
28	„ 12	Ditto. N.N.W.
29	„ 15	Ditto. N.N.W.
30	„ 11	Ditto. W.N.W.
December 1	„ 17	Ditto. N.W.
2	„ 12	Ditto. N.N.W.
3	„ 8	Snow. S.W.
4	„ 10	Cloudy. W.
5	„ 15	Clear. N.W.
6	„ 20	Calm.
7	„ 40	Ditto.

METEOROLOGICAL TABLE—*continued.*

Date.	At 8 A. M.	State of the Weather.
	Degrees.	
December 8	Frost 35	Calm.
9	„ 30	Ditto.
10	„ 15	Ditto. Wind N. W.
11	„ 10	Ditto.
12	„ 10	Snow. S. W.
13	„ 8	Ditto. S. W.
14	„ 15	Cloudy. W.
15	„ 20	Calm.
16	„ 22	Ditto.
17	„ 16	Clear. Wind N. W.
18	„ 10	Ditto. N. E.
19	„ 15	Ditto. W.
20	„ 12	Ditto. W.
21	„ 10	Ditto. S. W.
22	„ 8	Snow. S. W.
23	„ 8	Clear. W.

CHAP. XXVIII.

JOURNEY FROM TOMSK TO KRASNOYARSK.

Departure from Tomsk.—Inconveniences of the Snow Roads.—Quantities of Snow.—A Village nearly buried.—Brutality of my Fellow-travellers.—Quarrel with every body.—Difference of Wine upon a Frenchman and Siberian.—Meeting a Caravan.—Russian Regulations about giving way when meeting on Snow Roads.—Warlike Courier.—Treatment of the Drivers of a Caravan.—Moral Causes and Effects.—More Caravans.—Damage our *Sani*.—Upset.—Courier wounded.—Admirable Qualities of the *Yemstchiks*.—Accident, two Men killed.—Further Upsets.—Change Places with the Courier.—Several Tossings in the Snow.—Dangerous Position of my Fellow-passengers from Drinking.—Coolness of the *Yemstchik*.—Remarks on the Character of Russian Drunkenness.—Bad Directors of Education.—Pleasant *Yemstchik*.—Better Roads.—Rapid Course.—Arrival at Krasnoyarsk.

On leaving the good town of Tomsk, we found the snow roads excellent; and, as the night approached, we were entering upon that stage at which the traveller begins to overcome his regrets, when they are not too lively, in relation to all he leaves behind, and to indulge in those anticipations which belong to the earlier portion of a journey. But as I was not able to communicate with my ill-favoured companions, or the parties in front of us, save only regarding matters of absolute necessity, I was left to enjoy my reflections alone.

Though the roads were good near the town, we shortly began to experience an inconvenience which is found in all countries in which I have travelled upon the snow, occasioned by ruts or trenches which are cut by the sledges and lie across the roads, and cause a jerking

and jumping of the sledge, which is disagreeable and fatiguing to the traveller. They are here, however, confined to certain parts where there is much travelling. In our Canadian colonies they are called cradle hills; in Siberia, *ouchabii*. They are worse in proportion to the length of the period of the cessation of snow; for whenever the snow falls they are filled up, and for a time the ways are again good. Towards the spring, however, at which season there is usually less snow falling than in the earlier part of the winter, they render the roads where there is much travelling, almost impassable. In proportion to the number of vehicles passing, they are worse in Siberia than in North America, on account of the "runners" or *polozia* of the sledges here being shorter, as before mentioned, than those of the American vehicle. The advantage would be incalculable, were the government to determine the length of the *polozia*, which should be in proportion to the dimensions of every *sani*, and at least, a third longer than that at present in use, and oblige every one to conform to the regulation.

This obstruction to our way however, which had been occasioned by the passage of some caravans, was but temporary; after which we passed smoothly and rapidly on. The country was generally plain; and dark firs were scattered at intervals, or formed groves, which were almost concealed by the snow that rested upon the spreading boughs of the trees. The road was generally a mere path but a very little broader than the *sani;* and we sometimes passed between walls of snow above our heads, as if we were upon a railway that had been cut through a solid rock of alabaster.

While it was still day, we passed by a village that was scarcely visible on account of the depth of the snow. On one side, the frozen element had drifted into heaps before the houses, that concealed every thing

but the points of their gable fronts, and on the other, banks of half the height of the houses were heaped up before them. The road was here like a deep trench from which numerous alleys cut in the snow on either side, led to the fronts of the houses or to the courts.

Before this first day of my new journey closed, I confess I was already beginning to get tired of the company of my fellow-travellers. One of them had a wooden leg, which he tossed about as if both his fellow-passengers had the same. And so far from their manners improving as the effects of their debauch went off, nothing could now exceed their coarseness and incivility.

Late in the evening, we arrived at the village of Semiloujnaya, at twenty-nine versts from Tomsk. Here I trusted that some occasion would arise to produce some sort of fellow-feeling between my travelling companions and myself. The reverse, indeed, I remembered well had been the after effects of the champagne upon the French professor, with whom I had made the last journey; but I believed, that national dissimilitude or perhaps prejudice, had some share in effecting the change I had on that occasion to regret; and, at least, I did not suppose that any such feeling towards an Englishman existed among the Siberians.

During the short space of time that we passed at this first station at which we stopped, my fellow-travellers contrived to quarrel with every one who came near us. They seemed, also, only to regret the difficulty they would have to encounter on account of the want of a common language, in case they made any trial to do the same with myself. I easily discovered, indeed, that I was already a particular object of their dislike; for I knew enough of their tongue to understand them distinctly, when they several times repeated words that I had frequently heard drop from the mouths of commer-

cial men of the inferior classes, and which I knew to signify that English spies ought not to be allowed in the country. I had no reason, however, to think they spoke in a political sense; but on the contrary, I doubted not that they alluded to what concerned merely the mines and the commerce and riches of the country. It was impossible, however, for us to dispute. Had I been desirous of resenting this want of courtesy, my tongue for all such purposes was a "stingless instrument." I therefore took no notice of any thing that the ill-mannered fellows appeared to say or do. Yet I never sat in company more disagreeable.

When we resumed our journey after this first relay, the atmosphere was loaded with a thin vapour, which obscured the sky, though the thermometer was at 15 degrees of frost; but the night, as the moon was above the horizon, was nevertheless light. We had the usual number of horses; and as the road offered no obstruction, we glided smoothly on our way; and we had not certainly made a verst, when I found my companions, who had eaten enormously and drunk together a bottle of cognac that they brought with them, had fallen at least into a state of insensibility. I was myself also disposed to repose; and, as every thing was obscured that the night offers of interest to contemplate, I disposed my bed and my furs, and after bidding good night to my more civilised fellow-travellers in front of us, I endeavoured to sleep.

Nothing, however, was further off than that balmy repose from which we awake to new life and fresh spirits. One petty adventure after another defied every thing but potations without measure, to induce forgetfulness; and in this I had no inclination to imitate my fellow-travellers. We first met the advance detachment of a caravan from the border town of China, proceeding with tea for the fair of Nijhni Novgorod of the coming

summer. It consisted of about twenty *sani* laden, and every one drawn by one horse. The ways are always narrow, and such as have been already described, upon snow roads where there is not constant travelling; and this renders it necessary when two parties meet, that one of them should get off the road, and plunge his horse or horses into the midst of a bank of snow, the bottom of which is probably two or three feet, and often much more, beneath the beaten way which forms the proper road, while the other party passes on uninterruptedly upon his smooth way. Thus a question arises, concerning which is to have the privilege of proceeding, and which must give way. This in a lawless country, would doubtless be decided by numbers, or by the reputation of the parties for dealing blows, or by an appeal itself to their weapons at hand. Siberia, however, though it wants many things needful to form quite the same state of society we enjoy in our Britain, wants not so important a law as to prevent any private strife upon these occasions. Thus, this question is decided by the relative rank of the parties; and, in order to ascertain this, when there is no uniform in either of the *sani*, and no other token of rank apparent, the two *yemstchiks* usually hold a peaceful parley to settle the matter. But when the parties are plain citizens, and wear no uniform, some difficulty arises; and were it not that the *yemstchiks* are the best-disposed fellows in the world, this would often, as it does occasionally, bring about between passengers of greater courtesy than those now asleep in our sledge a very warm dispute. In our case, however, not the slightest question could arise. Bells strung round our horses' necks and beneath the bow over the middle horse's head, announced, not our individual importance, but the approach of the Czar's servants on duty, and, early enough warned all those who did not actually wear

uniform which indicated higher services than that of our courier, that the sooner they plunged into the pit upon one side or other of the road the better. The case however, it must be confessed, was a very hard one for those we now encountered. Twenty horses must leap into the gulf of snow, with heavy loads behind them, that three might pass by, that were tripping along with a vehicle that glided as lightly over the way as a skater upon the icy surface of a lake. On this account, we ought not to have been surprised to find the peasant drivers of these loaded *sani* stop, as there could be no doubt, to see of what disposition our courier might be, or what amount of charity his passengers, in case he had any, might chance to possess, before they encountered so great an inconvenience.

One or two parties that we had previously met, with at least heavy burdens, had gone off the road before we came within a hundred yards of them, and we passed them half-buried in the snow. The number, however, of the present party seemed to have encouraged them to hope they might find some relaxation of the too rigid custom or law; and the drivers had all collected in front of the first sledge, for, as it was evident, a peaceful parley.

Our brave courier was armed with a broad sword in a bright steel case, such as we look upon in these comparatively peaceful days, rather with curious than belligerent interest; and I should as soon have expected to see it put to use against ourselves, as against any save determined robbers, who, however, are seldom known to attack a government equipage in any part of the Russian empire. Nevertheless, the *yemstchik* no sooner drew up in face of the caravan, than the warlike official jumped from his seat, sword in hand, and attacked the whole of the opposite party with a fury and success that nothing but a wolf in a sheepfold could have equalled. Some of the party ran one way and

some the other, and some plunged into the snow to escape the edge of the sword. But our agile hero pursued such as could not get far from the road, and with the back of his drawn weapon, dealt blows across the shoulders of several that were fixed in the snow, that brought forth the most piteous cries, not unmingled with tears. All prayed for mercy, and none offered any resistance, or even mingled any reproaches with their complaints. But nothing availed until the warrior, weary of conquering, put up his bright steel, and resumed his seat.

The scattered enemy now returned to their sledges, and, in their terror of another onslaught, with all possible diligence forced their horses and *sani* into the gulf of snow by the side of the road, to remain it was difficult to say how long; and our bells jingled again, and we went merrily on.

To all accounts of victories and defeats belong, not more the details of numbers and losses, than their moral causes; and this encounter ought not to be an exception. The easy victory in this instance, was neither to be attributed to the bravery of the conqueror, nor to any pusillanimity on the side of the vanquished. There was neither an act of courage nor cowardice on either side in the whole affair. The glory of the action was due to the uniform alone, which inspired the confidence of a single hand to make the attack on the one side, and the respect which caused the defeat and flight of twenty on the other. Yet an annalist of the bloodless, though not tearless victory, if he would pursue the moral further, might call in question the amount of honour done to the symbol of authority, by a combat between one subject with the signs of his service, and twenty as faithful as he, armed with the justice of their cause.

Before we had made many versts, we met the second detachment of the same caravan; and upon their stopping

at some short distance from us, as if in doubt what to do, our fiery courier, to whom their delay was like defiance, leaped again from his seat to attack them. But the foremost of this party had plunged, with his horse by his side, up to his middle in the snow, before the warrior reached him. There was, in fact, a general scramble who should bury himself first or deepest in the cold bed beside them. Some blows were nevertheless dealt again upon the less agile; but we passed on upon this occasion without experiencing any delay.

After a few more versts, we met a third detachment, the good drivers of which plunged into the snow before we came near them, and our heroic courier maintained his seat. A fourth detachment, which we also met, did the same as the last. But here a little accident happened to our *sani* which afterwards caused us much trouble, but which it was fortunate we did not perceive in time to admit of the vengeance it would certainly have brought upon the party which was the innocent cause of it. In galloping by one of the laden vehicles, which was not quite clear of the path, we knocked off a little appendage to the *sani*, which it is necessary to mention more particularly.

From either side of this winter vehicle, about a foot above the *polozia*, or runners, projects a sort of fender, consisting of a short piece of wood, which stands out from the side near the end, and a longer piece, in the form of the blade of a scythe, leading forward like a stay to the smaller. They are called *otvodi*, and they serve two useful purposes They throw every thing off with which the *sani* comes in contact, or break the force of the blow; and they act as a third *polozia*, and prevent the vehicle upsetting in all but extreme cases.

While the road is level and clear, these appendages are of little or no use. But it happened that the caravan had so cut up the ways, that it now required

much management on the part of the *yemstchik* to prevent our *sani* upsetting. For the present, however, we kept upright. But after passing rapidly by another of these parties, who gave place at the sound of our bells, we knocked off the remaining fender, with as little consciousness of the mischief at the moment as we had had when we lost the first. And the road too was now so bad, that after some time balancing, first upon one side and then upon the other, we were tossed over into the snow, and so completely, that the *sani* lay in a position almost topsy-turvy. I had the good fortune to be the least encumbered as well as the least drowsy of the party; and I easily got out upon the road. But my less happy fellow-travellers, as they now recovered from the state of stupefaction in which they had hitherto remained, found themselves confounded with the baggage and beds; and, as if it were less important to extricate themselves than to exhibit their anger, they commenced a tirade of abuse against the poor *yemstchik*, who was still holding the reins tight in his hand, and aided by the courier, tramping in the snow into which he had been thrown and half buried, and endeavouring to reach the horses' heads.

The courier was the only one of the party that received any injury. One of his legs was sprained, but not enough to inconvenience him for the present.

It should be mentioned here, that among several good qualities possessed by the *yemstchiks* of Siberia, who are usually men taken from the peasantry of the villages, are great presence of mind and fidelity in cases of real danger, such as an upset, where, to abandon the reins, would lead to serious and perhaps fatal consequences. An accident occurred a short time since in the vicinity of one of the villages which lay in our way, on which occasion one of these men was drawn a verst upon the road after the *sani* had upset, without quitting

his hold of the reins, and at the end of which he mastered his horses and regained his seat. Another *yemstchik*, the year before, though less fortunate, had under similar circumstances held the reins until he was wounded and insensible. After this, his *sani*, which was firmly closed, fell, and drew the horses, over the bank of a ravine, by which two passengers, who had not been able to extricate themselves, as well as the horses, were killed. The bodies of these passengers were found with heavy baggage upon them, one, with the neck broken, and the other with a contusion on the stomach.

We were a full hour upon the occasion of this upset before we had our sledge again in right order to proceed, during the whole of which time my fellow-travellers amused themselves with abusing the poor *yemstchik*, who pointed out the disabled condition of the *sani*, but in vain. I was not sorry I could not understand the language they made use of, if their actions and gestures were suited to their words.

This adventure was but the beginning, however, of our troubles in this way. The road now became worse, and we soon turned a second time over. On this occasion I happened to be upon the wrong side; and I did not so easily disembarrass myself from the luggage as I had been able to do before. And now we had a second edition of the coarse torrent of abuse heaped upon the *yemstchik*. The courier, however, was the worst off again; for he had been sitting upon the portion of the *sani* that covered our feet, and was thrown backwards with his feet uppermost into the snow, and much bruised by the hood of the *sani* which passed over him.

When we were able to proceed, my fellow-passengers resumed their seats; but for myself, I gladly embraced the opportunity of getting out of their company, by changing places with the courier, who was now suffering

too much from his sprain and his fresh bruises together to be able to keep his seat outside.

After this the road somewhat improved, and we now glided bravely on without accident for several hours. The night, too, was still lighter; and after the exercise occasioned by our accidents, the cold seemed less; so that, by the side of the sole companionable being, as I could not help deeming the *yemstchik* to be, of all the party among whom my lot had thrown me, although we could not converse together, I enjoyed the change.

The road soon, however, became as bad as ever, and the *yemstchik* and myself were now four or five times thrown off our seats into the snow, which was here however heaped up too high on both sides to admit of the *sani* fully upsetting and discharging its interior freight; and the *yemstchik* always maintained firm hold of the reins, and easily arrested the course of our steeds. But on one occasion I was jerked off alone, and the *sani* had left me far behind, by the time the horses, which were at full speed, could be stopped; and there happening to be a declivity on the side upon which I was thrown, I rolled down twenty paces at least beneath the road before recovering myself; and I had great difficulty, with all my furs on, in climbing up to the road again.

But our troubles in this way were not even yet at an end. During the jerks of the *yemstchik* and myself from our seats outside into the snow, we heard nothing of the travellers within. There was a leathern curtain before the part where they were seated, adapted to close when necessary, but which, during the first part of the night had been only partially drawn. But upon the courier's entering the *sani*, this had not only been closed, but buttoned up in a manner that hardly seemed prudent after the vehicle had been twice regularly upset already. However, hearing nothing further of our fellow-

travellers, we trusted they were more comfortable than ourselves. It happened, however, at about two o'clock in the morning, while we were at full speed, that we came suddenly upon a part of the road that was more than ordinarily cut up by the loaded caravans, or more unlevel at the foundation; and this defect being concealed from the eyes of the *yemstchik* by the colourless snow, until it was too late, the *sani* went over again, for a third time, and deposited the *yemstchik* and myself in the snow as before. The horses were now stopped; and we soon stood upon the firm footing of the beaten track; but, to the surprise of both of us, not a word, not an oath, issued from within, though the *sani* lay completely on its side. The *yemstchik* however, without exhibiting any surprise, proceeded, before we attempted to set the vehicle upright, to unbutton the leathern curtain, which, as the fastenings were inside, was not to be done in a moment.

I confess I was at a loss to account for the silence within. The luggage could not but be quite overthrown, as it had been before; and, piled as the travellers must be upon one another, amidst all the loose beds and goods, it was impossible to suppose they could be tranquilly sleeping. We contrived to unbutton and withdraw the curtains, however, after some trouble; and certainly when I now saw three men huddled upon one another, speechless and motionless, I at first thought they were lifeless also. But the *yemstchik* did not betray the smallest surprise or doubts at what he saw, or hesitation what to do. *Nechavo*, "There is no harm done," said he, and proceeded partially to button up the curtains again, and then to make arrangements for setting the sledge once more upright. The three fellows were all in truth in that precious condition, to express which we are apt to seek a simile, in comparing men with the beasts, which however, we abundantly

dishonour in so doing, seeing that not one among them ever degrades his nature by depriving himself of the use of the spare portion of reason which has been given to him. The fact was, as we afterwards discovered, that after drinking all their own spirits, they had found a bottle of brandy of mine, which I had brought by way of precaution, and had not yet opened; and, after snugly buttoning themselves up, they had drunk away, until they had not left a drop in the bottle nor a particle of animation in their bodies or their minds.

Had there been at this time five or six more degrees of cold than we happened to have, we should have had some difficulty in preventing our drunken fellow-travellers from freezing to death. As it was, indeed, we were afraid to disencumber the *sani* of them, and lay them and the luggage on the snow, as we ought to have done had it been otherwise, while we set the vehicle upright, lest the frost might be greater than was apparent. We now therefore set about the necessary labour to put us again, if possible, upon the road, without turning any thing out of the vehicle. After untackling the horses, we took the shafts out of the *sani*, and made levers of them; and by this means, after about two hours of hard labour, we effected our object. This performed, we now secured the drunkards in the best manner we could, and resuming our seats, continued our way.

After this, as we proceeded we found less snow, and a consequent improvement in the roads; and we went steadily on, until we reached the village of Colionskaya, where we arrived after the sun was an hour high.

The half-dead and half-alive sots now alighted, with countenances that seemed more like those of fallen spirits in their most malicious moods, than such as should belong to honest men. The heroic courier, however, was entitled to some sympathy on account of

his former accident; for his leg had now swollen so much, that he was unable to walk without support.

We had here a breakfast of *stchee*, with good rye bread; and after a short delay, during which we partly repaired the damage to our *sani* which had caused us so many accidents, we continued our journey.

It may, perhaps, here be permitted to the traveller to make a single observation concerning the different effects of intemperance upon the two classes of the Russian people among whom we have seen this vice prevailing in the course of our progress—the peasantry, and the class who have received such a degree of instruction as ought to render them capable of showing a better example to their fellow-subjects deprived of this inestimable advantage. It should be premised, that the examples that have been seen, are believed to be fair specimens of the true character of this prevailing vice with these two classes. The question then suggests itself, seeing that the Russian government is extending education throughout the empire, regardless of any of those fears of the consequences which formerly belonged to all governments, without exception of our own: What effect is instruction to produce, if the direction given to it be not such as to diminish an offence against good manners and morals, now so prevalent throughout the empire? The peasant has no more idea at this day, that he commits any moral error, or any offence against society, when he indulges in his extraordinary draughts of *vodka*, to the waste of his means of comfort and of the improvement of his condition, than we have, when we drink the quantity of wine or beer that we take to nourish and strengthen us; whereas, men of the other class of drunkards, capable of knowing the degradation to which they subject themselves, yet incapable, from an omission in the mode of their education, of correcting this vice, lose with their good manners every claim to

civilisation, and exhibit one of the most degraded samples of a class of men, to be found in any part of the world.

Thus it must be the opinion of every reflecting person, that the prevalence of this vice among the peasantry must tend to arrest their civilisation, and among the class above them, to convert the proper elements of improvement into the means of the most extensive demoralisation. It would be better to arrest education altogether, or permit instruction to the sons of those alone who can send their children to the universities and higher schools, than leave unchecked this degrading vice among this class of the people.

The mists which had obscured the sky during the night, dispersed with the appearance of the sun above the horizon, and at noon, the cold had increased to 15 degrees, with a bright and cloudless sky. We stopped to dine to-day at the village of Podielnitschnaya, where we had much the usual fare, and the accustomed good treatment by the family of the officials, and the good fortune of finding neither *vodka* nor cognac; and we had the same advantage again at the post-house at Tiginskaya, where we arrived early in the night.

In consequence of the lameness of the courier, I had remained in the good company of the *yemstchik*, who was not, however, the same that had driven us the preceding night. I had parted with our tried friend with regret; but his substitute, who now conducted us, was an exact copy of my former companion, and as strict in his duty, and as great a contrast in disposition to the three drunken fellows behind us. When however he found I could not converse with him, and when nothing obstructed our way, or called for more than ordinary attention, he amused himself in alternately scolding and encouraging his horses — not in spare epithets such as we sometimes use, but in perfect

lectures, in long and short sentences—and at intervals in chanting airs, which, if they were rather monotonous, were doubtless his best, and I derived pleasure in listening to them.

The small quantity of snow that had fallen here, and the little drift to which it had been subjected, had left the roads especially good. The passage too of the caravan, seemed even to have benefited rather than injured them; and while the horses galloped at full speed, we seemed now to glide as smoothly over the surface of the beaten snow, as we might imagine the cars of the beings of poets' creations along the baseless ways above the clouds. We made a short stay at the village of Tchernoretschneschaya in the middle of the night, and at that of Bolschekemtschougskaya towards the morning, and at both of these there were stations at which we changed horses.

The third day of our journey broke upon us like the second, clear and bright; but with the cold augmented to 22 degrees.

We breakfasted about two hours after sun-rise, at the village of Mabokemtschougskaya.

As I had now been above six and thirty hours without sleep, I thought it proper to resume my place in the *sani*, in order to have the opportunity of reposing during the day; and more especially, as the cold was increasing, and probably would arrive at a degree before the coming night at which it would be desirable, if possible, to keep awake. The invalided courier too was better, and I did not think there remained any obligation for any further sacrifice of comfort.

The sun shone full in our faces, pale and without affording any sensible heat, as we renewed our gallop along the undeviating plain, and amid the same scene, which we were accustomed to behold, presenting nothing to relieve the eye, save a few stunted dark firs, which

were distributed with monotonous regularity, and wide apart, on all sides around.

On the fourth day, we breakfasted at the post-house at the village of Soledieva, and soon after, entered a country more hilly than any I had seen since passing the Ural Mountains. About noon we came upon the top of a hill, from which we obtained the first view of the Yenessei, one of the three great rivers of Siberia which empty themselves into the Frozen Ocean; and we had a view, at the same time, of the town of Krasnoyarsk, upon the opposite side of the river, at the distance of but three or four versts.

The sight of no place of repose could ever have been more welcome to a traveller, than to myself at least, was that of the town now within our view. We glided with great swiftness down the hill, and passed as rapidly over the ice of the river, which was swept clear of snow by the winds, and arrived at our destination early in the afternoon, myself at least, determined to make no more experiments in travelling with Siberian couriers.

CHAP. XXIX.

KRASNOYARSK.

Population.—Inhabitants.—Position.—Buildings.—The Traveller's Difficulties.—Incivility of the People.—A Day among Rogues.—Meeting with a French Merchant.—Change of Lodgings.—Drunken *Chinovnik*.—Arrival of Alcibiades.—Effects of evil Company.—The German Character.—Introduction to Gospodin Vassilieſki.—Character of his Dwelling.—Company.—His Amusements during the Winter.

KRASNOYARSK is the chief town and seat of the government in the department of Yeneseisk. It contains a population of between 5000 and 6000 souls; and it is the place of residence of a civil governor, who presides over similar institutions to those of Tomsk. Its importance, however, is chiefly derived from the residence of several of the larger proprietors, or their agents, of the mines situated upon the smaller streams of the Yenessei in its vicinity.

After the particular details given concerning Tomsk, it will suffice here to advert, in a few general remarks, to those particulars in which Krasnoyarsk differs from its more successful rival in population and wealth. After this, some few remarks may be made upon the society of the town as it presents itself to the stranger, and as it fell under the traveller's observation, during a fortnight's sojourn among those of whom it is composed.

This town is situated upon the right bank of the Yenessei, in a narrow plain between two ranges of hills, which probably rise about 500 or 600 feet above the level of the plain. The evenness of the ground upon which it stands has admitted of its being laid out and built with more regularity than Tomsk. It has three

handsome streets of detached houses, and has a more agreeable air than its rival city. The same prodigality of riches is seen however, here, as at Tomsk. One remarkable dwelling, belonging to Gospodin Mesnikeiff, and built by the government architect, is probably the most spacious and extravagant private residence to be found in the country. Its dimensions are 131 feet in length, 98 in breadth, and 52 in height; and it is of two stories and furnished after the most elegant mode of St. Petersburg. The articles alone that were brought from that capital cost its owner between 6000 and 7000 pounds sterling.

The official or public buildings of Krasnoyarsk are similar to those of Tomsk. It has five churches, all of which are for the Russian ritual, and a cathedral in the course of erection.

The circumstances which immediately followed my arrival at Krasnoyarsk, were not calculated to give a stranger either a favourable or just impression of the character of its inhabitants. I was at this time still without any reply to my letter addressed to the British ambassador at St. Petersburg concerning my travels, and which, indeed, I could not receive before my arrival at the capital of the eastern government of Siberia. I knew I had, therefore, to depend solely upon the character of the Russians of the superior classes—of which, however, I had had already sufficient experience — for that degree of hospitality or politeness, without which, when we travel beyond the limits of more generally diffused civilisation, we can neither employ our time profitably nor agreeably. I had arrived, indeed, furnished with a letter written by my good friend, whose particular politeness during the time we were together at Tomsk I have already acknowledged, addressed to Gospodin Vassilicfski, a gentleman well known throughout Siberia, and engaged in the management of some of

the richer mines of the crown in this vicinity. On my arrival, however, the answer I received to my first inquiries was, that this gentleman was at present at the mines, and that he was not expected to return to Krasnoyarsk for several weeks. This news involved me in some difficulty. I knew there was neither an Englishman nor a Frenchman in the town, and also that there was no respectable house of accommodation for travellers; and I had neither servant nor interpreter. Nevertheless, I had heard that there was a German *conditor* or confectioner settled here, whose house sometimes supplied the place of an hotel, and with whom I might possibly get accommodated. I therefore made my way to his house with all possible expedition, in the hope of providing myself with a lodging of some sort. I thought that under any circumstances a foreigner settled in Siberia would be glad to see any stranger from Western Europe. I discovered, however, on my arrival at the *conditorei* that I had neither found a lodging nor a friend in my need. The man had no rooms to let for sleeping. His house was a mere place of resort for the votaries of Bacchus, by whom it was frequented both by day and by night. In this dilemma, and night approaching, I was nevertheless obliged to solicit the *conditor's* aid, or advice at least, to enable me to find some sort of quarters until the next day. This, however, the fellow directly refused, out of the mere wantonness which belongs to that class of Siberians with whom, in spite of his birth or his descent, he was identified. Nay, he would not even allow my baggage, which was in the *sani*, to be brought in, to wait until I obtained quarters, lest this should pledge him to provide for me for the night. Fortunately, however, there happened to be a young man of the same origin in the house, who had "not yet lost all his virtue;" and he accompanied me to make a search for what was to be obtained.

After walking about and making some inquiries, we entered a peasant's house, which was resorted to occasionally by *yemstchiks* and conductors of caravans, where I was able to provide myself with a room, in which I took up my quarters for the present. It was, indeed, a dirty dull hole, and had no furniture; but it was warm, and I was not in search of luxuries. I was provided with a travelling bed, and I did not care a farthing for any thing further.

My guide now left me, and the accustomed *samovar* and a tea-pot and tumbler were brought by a maiden, and set on the ground, and I placed my bed, rolled up, by the side of them, for a chair, and sat down upon it to prepare the refreshing beverage with that delightful feeling which is incident to the first hour of our escape from any sort of bondage of body or mind, and with as much satisfaction as if I had found a European hotel. After the *samovar*, the peasants brought me a mess of *stchee*, which formed a tolerable dinner and supper; and after another trip to the *conditorei*, upon the speculation of finding some person with whom I might chance to be able to converse, but without success, I spread out my bed and laid myself down for the night.

As soon as I arose the next morning, I should have waited upon the governor, had I not learned that his excellency did not speak any language in which I was capable of conversing, which induced me to determine to defer doing myself that honour until a better opportunity might offer.

During this day, matters however, began a little to mend. Upon again coming to the *conditorei*, I had the satisfaction of meeting a French gentleman, Monsieur Alabare, a merchant, who had been long settled in Eastern Siberia, and who was on his way to Europe to purchase merchandise to replenish his stock at Irkoutsk. This proved for me a most fortunate encounter, as

Monsieur Alabare was a man of that politeness, which, if the estimable attribute be less general among his countrymen than in a past age, we still remember, with hope, that when the revolutionary spirit of the nation has died away, it may again be known, and again distinguish a Frenchman in Europe. After inquiring where I was lodged, my new friend proposed to accompany me in his *sani*, which was at the door, to inspect my apartment; and as he spoke the Russian language fluently, and was necessarily well acquainted with the people, I gladly accepted his offer.

On our arrival at my quarters, a host of fellows covered with hair and sheepskins, assembled in my elegant apartment; and after my friend had held a parley with them, he assured me, that he considered the life of any one in possession of a few dollars, about as safe with a set of such scoundrels as he believed these people to be, as an unarmed single hand might be in one of the mines of the country worked by the worst of the criminals, who were only restrained by the bayonets of the mining corps from committing violence, even against one another.

The parley out of which this opinion arose had been rather long; but the result being known, no difficulty remained about the step to be taken; so I placed my pistols, which had been lying upon my portmanteau, in the girdle of my *schouba*, packed up my bed, paid what was demanded, and, aided by my friend only (for the rogues would not assist), carried all my effects out of the house to the *sani*, into which we now jumped, and drove back to the inhospitable *conditorei*.

As M. Alabare was in hopes of finding some one here that might still aid my endeavours to find a safer place to lodge in, upon our reaching the house, we left the *sani* and the property in it to the custody of parties known to my friend, whom we happened to meet at the

door, and directed our steps to the *conditor's* bacchanalian apartment, where we found assembled several persons of all descriptions of the inhabitants of the country, playing billiards and drinking champagne and *vodka*. Happily, however, and strange to say, among the *chinovnik*, several of whom were mixed with the rest, we found a young man civil enough to give us the address of a good woman with whom himself and several others lived; for whose house, therefore, we now set off immediately.

Where the uniform is found, which is dreaded by the worst, as much as it is respected by the better classes in Siberia, it was certain there must be some sort of security against the scoundrels with whom the place abounded. On our arrival at the good woman's, we found an apartment unoccupied, furnished with a table and two chairs, besides a frame for a bed, which were comforts not to be despised in such a situation; so I took possession immediately; and my obliging friend now left me, to continue his journey towards the Ural Mountains.

Our sufferings or our enjoyments of the hour are no doubt generally in proportion to the character of those that have preceded them. And certainly, when I now contemplated the luxury of my apartment, full of light, and passing clean, and furnished as above described, I wondered at my yesterday's enjoyment of a chamber dark as Erebus, very dirty, and with no furniture at all, and almost the common passage of hairy rogues, with countenances as little like those of Christian men, as the apartment was like any thing that could under other circumstances than the immediate escape from such company as I had eaten, drunk, and slept in for several days and nights, have afforded enjoyment to the most weary traveller.

But notwithstanding the luxury and tranquillity that

I now enjoyed, such is the difficulty of supporting solitude—and to this at least I seemed now condemned—that I was not displeased when, early in the evening, two sottish-looking *chinovnik*, who were living in the house, came to my room to invite me to theirs, and I even gladly accompanied them.

In the apartments of my fellow-lodgers were assembled about twenty of the same sort of characters as those that riot nightly in all the towns of Siberia at this season upon the gains of summer, and who have not escaped notice in a previous page, and about half that number of the gentler sex. Some were dancing, and some were drinking *vodka*, and some were playing antics such as might suit very well the domestics of the god of wine, among whom, if the deity have an apartment beneath his own grand hall, we may suppose wanting the lute and the poetry, which should refine or draw something from the grossness of celestial as well as terrestrial bacchanals above stairs. I succeeded, however, in making my escape from this precious company at a tolerably early hour, and now laid myself down for my second night at Krasnoyarsk.

The next day, the hope of meeting some one with whom I might converse, carried me again to the *conditorei*; but I found no one. In the evening, however, I made another visit to the same house; and on this occasion I began to glean some useful information concerning the place; and I heard, what much interested me, that the governor's lady was acquainted with the French language, which determined me to make a visit the very next day at the government-house, where I trusted I should at least hear something of the return of the gentleman to whom I had been addressed by my Tomsk friends.

But while I was engaged over a tumbler of tea in an inner room, in obtaining what little information I could

draw from these unaccommodating people, suddenly, from the chamber of Bacchus, reached my ears, well open to the sound, the loud shout from many voices of Alcibiades! Alcibiades! and feeling tolerably sure that there could not be two parties entitled to that name in the land, I hastened to the spot, and had the unmingled gratification of meeting my veritable friend. Alcibiades had arrived that very moment from the mines; and at his appearance among the bacchanals assembled, the whole party had suddenly given expression to their joy by the shouts of his name that had been heard through the house; and as I entered the room, a dozen of the tribe were around him, congratulating his arrival. My own joy, indeed, when I shook hands with my friend, could not have been inferior to that of any one of them, though it was mingled with regret at finding so estimable a man in company apparently so objectionable. Nevertheless, the appellation chosen by the *savants* of Tomsk was herein not the less justified. Not less than the genius of Athens, to whom they had compared their countryman, was the genius of Siberia, capable of accommodating himself to every phase of society which the time and circumstances presented. Nor has vice, less in here than in Greece, sought to cover its ugliness by the seduction of those esteemed for the most estimable qualities which men possess.

My friend, who had already called at Gospodin Vassiliefski's, had heard that a foreigner and stranger had arrived in the town; but as I had not been there, he supposed it impossible to be the same to whom he had given the letter above mentioned. Not however having heard of any other foreigner being in this part of Siberia, he had come to solve the mystery; and upon now reproaching me for not having presented my letter, he was surprised to hear that I had been positively told by those who pretended to be correctly informed, that

his friend was at the mines, where, however, it appeared he had not been for some time. In fact, the information I had received turned out to be a mere invention of the malicious inhabitants of the house in which we were, who, from the habit of doing acts of incivility, took as much pleasure in committing the most wanton, as probably their fathers took in the land from which they came, in doing acts of politeness and kindness. It is only those who have had more than ordinary opportunities of observing the extremes of human character which the world affords, that might believe how often evil is committed for the pleasure alone of committing it. Before I visited Siberia, I thought the German character beyond the power of circumstances to change, since it has been found so little altered in Europe by the moral changes incident to the advance of physical science and the decline of poetry, which, so lately as even to be remembered by the present generation, quite adjusted the pulse of humanity. Nevertheless, those Germans of this class who reside long enough in Siberia, become not less corrupted than the adventurers from countries where the same class of the people are far less known for their inherent honesty and stability of character.

My friend now proposed driving me to the house of Gospodin Vassiliefski, to make the acquaintance of his friend; and as his *sani* was at the door, we set off without delay. We found the gentleman at home, and I received from him a hearty welcome. He was highly indignant, but not surprised, at the treatment I had received; and as he kept us for the rest of the evening, I had the pleasure of an introduction to his wife, a very young and pretty woman, with her first child in arms, and also of meeting several of his friends, among whom were Gospodin Dentu, the government architect, now employed in building the cathedral above mentioned, and a young gentleman of noble family, and from

Russia, engaged with Gospodin Dentu in the study of his profession.

Gospodin Vassiliefski's house was a model of neatness, which it would be well were it imitated by the millionnaires of Siberia; and in one of the rooms into which we were introduced, there was yet a more desirable example for the imitation of all those whose time hangs heavily upon their hands during the winter months. This was a lathe, in the use of which, judging from the specimens to be seen in every part of the house, my new friend appeared to be very skilful. Certainly no pursuit could be better adapted to procure at the same time both exercise and amusement.

I did not leave Gospodin Vassiliefski's after this first visit, without receiving a pressing invitation to take up my quarters with him; which, for the present, however, there being no real necessity for so doing (the luxury of my present apartment considered), I begged and obtained leave to decline.

CHAP. XXX.

KRASNOYARSK.

Visit to the Governor's.—Dinner at the Government-house.—Russian and Siberian Music.—Evening at the House of an Exile.—Family of the Exile.—Their Condition since their Arrival in Siberia.—Treatment of the Family by the Government.—An Exile's Wife.—Traveller forcibly removed to a Friend's House.—Cathedral.—Loyalty and Piety of the Siberians.—Origin of the Cathedral.—*Soirée* at an Architect's.—Christmas Amusements.—Ghosts.—Tragedy.—Merry Belles of Krasnoyarsk.

THE next day, Gospodin Dentu, who was a gentleman of French origin, but whose family had been long settled in Russia, called upon me to fulfil an engagement which he had voluntarily made on the previous evening, to accompany me in a visit to the government-house.

We found the governor at home, and I was received with great kindness. We had for the present, however, only a little general conversation with his excellency upon the ordinary topics of travelling; but we received an invitation to return at the dinner hour the same day.

My new, obliging friend called for me at the appointed time, and we drove again to the government-house, where we found a small party assembled; and I had now the pleasure of making the acquaintance of the wife of his excellency. The lady was the daughter of a late Governor-general of Eastern Siberia, at this time administering the government of the western departments, and she was in the flower of youth and

beauty, and possessed of European accomplishments. As soon as dinner was over, the chief part of the guests that had been at table, according to the custom of the country, retired. But it happened that my friend and myself broke through the rule on this occasion. The governor had a valuable collection of Siberian curiosities, which he brought out for inspection. Among them, not the least curious, were some idols of the nation of the Tungouze, with one of which his excellency presented me, as a memorial of my visit to Krasnoyarsk. After this, the lady favoured us with some native Russian airs, which she sang, and played upon the pianoforte with great taste and feeling. One of them was more lively than the airs of her country in general, but was interspersed with very grave variations, in mimicry of the monotonous strains of some of the wild Siberian tribes.

The following afternoon, I was taken by the same friend, to the house of one of the more remarkable of the political exiles who had been concerned in the last insurrection in Russia, and who was residing in an humble abode about two versts from the town. It was the *fête* day of one of this exile's family, and we wished to arrive before the hour of the gathering of his friends, which would be sure to take place in the evening. Fine snow, which had been falling for several days, was now drifting; and as no road was apparent, it was with much difficulty that we made our way. Upon approaching the house, we found it buried to the roof by the snow on one side, and nearly concealed by a bank formed on the other. After much difficulty, and aided by a part of the family, whom we found busily occupied in opening a way through the snow, we succeeded in gaining an entrance. We were received with the warmest feelings of welcome by the exile and his lady, with whom we had a long and in-

teresting conversation before any other guests arrived. The parties, however, began to make their appearance with the close of the day; and the gathering soon consisted of the *élite*, of all ages, of the good folks of Krasnoyarsk, including all the parties already mentioned, except those of the government-house; and we had now the usual amusements of dancing for the younger sort, and conversation for those of riper years or graver mood.

My curiosity was great on this occasion, as it was the first time I had entered the house of any one of the proper exiles since my arrival in the country. The house was a small and comfortable habitation of one story, and was very neatly and appropriately furnished. Besides the room in which the young people danced, there was a small apartment, where the lady of the house sat and entertained such of her guests of her own sex as at intervals retreated from the larger apartment to give freer scope to the dance; and another, where the greater portion of the gentlemen that were not disposed for the lighter amusement, conversed and smoked the *chiboock*.

Previously to his exile, our host had been an officer of rank in the imperial service; and as he had not very often the opportunity of meeting any one lately from Europe, there was plenty of scope for conversation. It was now a tranquil epoch in Europe. "Contention," though so soon to appear, had not yet "madly broke loose and borne all down before it;" and the news, commonly so called, which I had to communicate, was very scanty. The chief contribution, indeed, in this kind, on my part, consisted rather in correcting some extraordinary misapprehension of things in my own country, springing from reports found in French newspapers, which, as if they were the safest of all the publications in Europe of the same description, alone reach Siberia. On the

other hand, the exile related to me "a tale of times long past, but still with woe remembered," before he passed the fatal mountains which he is doomed never to recross; and he gave some account of his feelings and of his position with a single observation upon the origin of his misfortunes, which may be reported without any violation of that confidence which communications, without any such conditions, may nevertheless enjoin.

The exile had been a colonel in the army of the Emperor Alexander, and had made the campaign of 1812. We are all familiar with the history of that campaign; and there are few who do not know something of the moral effects of the occupation of Paris upon the Russians, and that a certain portion of that political philosophy which subjects the reason to the government of the passions and the fancy, was imbibed by some of the more enlightened and enthusiastic of the Russians during their stay in France. Among these, was this former soldier of the empire, now an exile in Siberia. He was then young, and susceptible of every feeling that touches the imagination. But now, near the grand climax of life, he was of opinion that the attempt for which he suffered with others, would in the future annals of Russia, exhibit no proof of the good sense of the Russian people of this age. He had been condemned to labour for life in the silver mines of Nertchinsk, and his wife had voluntarily followed his fortunes. He remained, however, but fourteen months in that part of the country, during which time he never descended to the mines. He had worked dressed in the suits provided for prisoners in his position; but his treatment had been mild, and the labour light and scarcely constrained. At the end of the above period he had been permitted to live in one of the villages in that vicinity, where he remained five years. After this, he was

allowed to inhabit any town in Siberia which he should himself choose, and he had fixed upon Krasnoyarsk.

I had been informed, that he was one of the exiles that had borne his fortunes with the least fortitude; and this led me to ask several questions, which elicited the following observations. He said, he believed that he supported his exile with less patience than the greater part of those who were subjected to the same trials, but that he could not attribute it to any other cause than his peculiar disposition, which was naturally energetic. His treatment, he said, was the same as that of the rest, and on that score he could not complain. He said, indeed, that it was impossible for it to be milder than it had been from the beginning, consistent with the conservation of the principle, for the attempt to overthrow which he suffered. His sole constraint, he said, also, now consisted in his not being permitted to return across the Ural Mountains. Indeed, he informed me, that he had received favours at the hands of the government, in regard to his family, that were much above his expectations; and, that two of his sons that were born before the event for which he had been banished, and who, by the law, should suffer perpetual exile, had received commissions in the army; and that a third, born in Siberia, was at present a cadet in one of the military colleges of Russia, and in the way of advancement. Besides these three sons, this exile had two daughters of tender years, and a boy who was deaf and dumb, to all of whom this snow-girt cottage had been their only home.

With the lady I had also much conversation concerning what had passed during twenty-three years that they had been in exile. And, although no such obligation as that above mentioned can be supposed to have been the condition of her communications, yet from a consciousness of being wholly unable to re-

produce them effectively, or to give a just account of the feelings of a wife and a mother, for so many long years the voluntary companion of her husband in exile, I shall forbear to make the attempt.

The lady's appearance was still so youthful, that she must have been in the very earliest years of womanhood at the time she crossed the fatal mountains, without a hope of ever returning. Her countenance indicated no suffering. Indeed, in some of the tones of her voice, and her manner of speaking, there appeared a degree of established cheerfulness, rather than of patience, which formed a great contrast to the anxious demeanour of her husband. And when I mentioned to my philosophical friend, who was present, that this particularly struck me, he said that he had noticed the same thing long before, and thought it unaccountable in her position, until he discovered, as he believed, that it arose from, and was at once the means and the effect of, administering consolation, and of calming the less patient spirit of her husband, which had been the occupation of her life since the epoch of their exile.

Upon the morning after this little gathering, Gospodin Vassilliefski came to my lodgings with a determination to remove me to his own house; and, as his servant entered directly into my room without any ceremony, to take up my effects to transport them to the *sani*, which was at the door, there was no choice left; so I accepted this good Russian's hospitality, and became now established in his dwelling for the rest of my stay at Krasnoyarsk.

The same day, Gospodin Dentu came to fulfil a promise he had made, of showing me the cathedral already mentioned, which he was constructing. The weather was fine and milder than usual, and he was desirous that we should not lose the favourable opportunity. The building was at this time finished ex-

ternally; but little labour had yet been bestowed upon the interior. It is a noble edifice, and of such dimensions and architectural beauty, as to strike all who behold it with wonder, at seeing so grand an edifice in the midst of so scanty a population.

The length of the new cathedral is 187 English feet, and its breadth 96 feet, without taking in the projections which form, at least, the similitude of the Greek cross, but which are not in this instance undue, or sufficient to break all harmony in the design, in the same degree which is observed in the greater part of the Russian churches. The height of the tower in front of the building is 198 feet, and that of the dome 182. It has three great entrances, and the socle or saale is of cut stone, and ten feet in height, and forms a base of great stability to the building.

The account given of the origin of this cathedral involves a little history well deserving notice, as affording an instance sufficiently illustrative of the prevailing feelings among the Siberians as well as among the Russians; while it serves, at the same time, to show that the prodigality of the Siberians is not wholly confined to what only tends to the gratification of personal importance, or the enjoyment of sensual pleasures.

The account was given me by the architect, while we were inspecting the cathedral. It appears that all the *fête* days of the imperial family, whether they are the anniversaries of birth or marriage, or the contracting of marriage, or of the sovereign's coming to the throne, are celebrated, and probably with more warmth, in these remote provinces, than in the capital cities of the empire. Now it happened, after the announcement of the birth of the eldest son of the present heir apparent to the throne, that a large party of proprietors

and agents of proprietors of mines, had assembled to celebrate the event, when the display of luxury and riches, led one of the party to compare the condition of those present, with their estate at the epoch of their arrival in Siberia, which most of them had entered with little, and some of them with nothing, beyond their spirit of enterprise and adventure. This led to a suggestion from one of them, now a wealthy proprietor of mines, that they ought to raise a temple to God, in testimony of their gratitude for the riches he had vouchsafed them. The suggestion was happy; and the chief chord of the Russian heart-strings was no sooner touched, than a proposition of one of the party, that the temple ought to be a grand cathedral dedicated to St. Nicholas, in honour of the new-born infant whose name had been announced with the news of his birth, was responded to by the universal assent of those present. Thus a subscription of 1,500,000 rubles assignat (about 60,000*l.* sterling), was at once entered into, of which 600,000 were put down immediately.

I spent the same evening at Gospodin Dentu's, where I met all the parties with whom I was previously acquainted, and several others. The company were distributed in two rooms, one of which was properly that of the gentlemen, and the other that of the ladies. Our host kept the men occupied, whether grouped in parties for conversation, or playing cards, or dozing over the *chiboock*, while his lady attended to her guests of her own sex. Not, however, that this disposition of the company was, or is at any time in any of the houses quite arbitrary. Every one passed at intervals from one room to the other, just as he or she thought proper. The studio also of the architect was open, where those whose taste disposed them to enter, found ample amusement. Nothing could exceed the ease and

comfort that prevailed, which contrasted to great advantage with the ceremony and the luxury and waste seen in some of the houses of the millionnaires. Our host was proud of his Gallic origin, and in his entertainment, was mingled the politeness of ancient France with the Russian unaffected hospitality; and every thing indicated an assurance on his side that his guests enjoyed themselves, without regard to the splendour of the entertainment.

At these social meetings, which continued during my stay at Krasnoyarsk, there were some little variations in the amusements, which are wont to be introduced at this season of the year, that were not unlike those known at the same season among ourselves, in some parts of the country.

One evening at Gospodin Vassilliefski's after the windows of the principal room had been closed up by the embanking of the snow during the day, which had rendered us duller than usual, in spite of one or two guests present, and while we were sitting distributed about the room, the door slowly opened, without the sound of a footstep, or the jar of lock or hinge, and a tall pale figure with fixed and glaring eyes, and robed in pure white, stalked majestically in, and needed no use of speech to be recognised for one of the spirits from the realms of the departed.

The apparition with "slow and solemn march," measured the room twice; and, if we were not quite "distilled to jelly with the act of fear," still nobody interrogated it, and it neither spoke, nor "addressed itself to speak." But, though menaced by no show of violence, nor alarm of cock-crow, when, with noiseless step it had thus twice paced the chamber, it shrank slowly away, and the door closed again as mysteriously as it had opened, and nobody knew more than they saw.

Another evening, when there was a larger party assembled, a whole troop of masked actors made their appearance, and performed a tragedy, the subject of which, by the prologue, was the slaughter of the Infants by King Herod. But, however the drama was managed, the stabbing and dying were confined to the chief actors of the piece, and no one found the story quite plain enough to understand. Who the actors were, was also uncertain, though an officer that was present believed that he recognised the voice of one of his warrant-officers.

On the same evening, a similar party entered, and enacted a historical piece of more agreeable interest. The subject was the crowning of a great King of the West, who had come from England to the Russian capital to receive his crown at the hands of the Czar, to whom, it is thought by most good Siberians who do not happen to be students of history or international relations, that all kings and princes owe their crowns and pay tribute.

Upon another evening, at Gospodin Dentu's, while we were merrily occupied in playing forfeits and other such games of the season, three immensely stout women entered, masked, and dressed in sheepskins, and in the furred boots which the peasant women wear when out of doors. Two of them danced, and, notwithstanding their dimensions, so lightly as to excite great curiosity to know who they were. This set the gentlemen to work to bar up the doors to stop their retreat, and to make endeavours to discover to whom they were indebted for the voluntary ballet. Upon this the bulky strangers fell to beating some of the too inquisitive parties, which led to a thorough scene of riot, and mirth, and laughter, which amused us for some time. Nevertheless, the two dancers being effectively imprisoned, danced

again until, in the midst of their steps, one of the masks fell off one of their faces, and the other dancer out of charity pulling off hers, and the third of the party doing the same, they were found to be two of the belles of Krasnoyarsk, under the protection of one of their mammas; and one of them was by birth a Kamtscha dale.

CHAP. XXXI.

KRASNOYARSK—*continued.*

The Mines of the District.—Streams upon which the Gold is found.—Effects of mining upon Agriculture and Commerce.—Advantages of some Districts.—Ill-adaptation of the Russian Character to settle the Country.—The Frost in the Ground.—The Soil.—Gardens at Krasnoyarsk.—Probable Destiny of the Town.—Causes.—Alarm of Arrest.—Difficulties of prosecuting these Travels.—Arrangements for Departure.—Companion opportunely procured.—Taking leave.—

As this was not the season at which the mines are in operation, I did not visit any of those in this vicinity; but I am indebted for the following particulars to the politeness of my friend Gospodin Vassilieſski, the superintendent of the government works throughout the district.

These important mines, exceeding those of the Ural in the riches which are drawn from them, are situated upon the tributaries of the grand River Yenessei. The most important of them lie along the shores of the two minor tributaries, the Octalick and the Kalami; and it is a remarkable fact, that in almost all cases these deposits of gold in Siberia, whether in beds of gravel or of sand, or amidst the quartz, are found upon such tributaries of the grand rivers, as are of the third or fourth grade, not in relation to their comparative magnitude or volume of water, but to the degrees by which they are removed from direct intercourse with the main stream.

The richest of these mines is situated upon the Octalick, which is four degrees removed from the main stream of the mighty river, into which its waters ulti-

mately fall by one of the larger tributaries, the River Pit. The mines upon this little stream occupied last year 12,000 labourers, nearly all of whom were exiles, and produced 100 pouds of gold in 212 days. The wages of the men, who, whether exiles or Siberians, are all free, and paid alike, are from 300 to 400 rubles for the season, and their board. In former years their wages were less, and provisions were cheaper; but since the augmentation of the gold works, the raising of cattle and the cultivation of the land have been much neglected; and now beef, which is the chief article of their consumption, has risen nearly 100 per cent. in value; and it has, moreover, for the most part, to be transported from a much greater distance than that at which it was obtained formerly. The price of this article was ten rubles the poud, or about twopence halfpenny a pound; and it was not to be obtained within the distance of a thousand versts from the seat of the mining operations. Some advantage, however, is derived from the famous fish, the nelmar. But that fish is not so abundant as in the Irtysch, where, it will be remembered, we found the means wanting to procure it.

The state of the mining operations, however, does not afford the only instance in which the interests of the country have suffered from the unequal march of agricultural pursuits with those which produce more immediate, though less solid advantages. The commerce with China has been directly affected by the scarcity of provisions; and every institution which the state of society has admitted has felt proportionate effects. It was said, however, to be the intention of the government to take a decisive step towards augmenting the agricultural population, by the introduction of a steadier and better class of men than have hitherto settled in Siberia.

The southern districts offer abundant advantages, from their incomparable soil and somewhat milder climate. It is doubtful, however, whether such a population can be obtained from Russia. The Russian peasant, seen even under the disadvantages of serfdom, is nevertheless known to be by nature too full of the spirit of adventure and love of change to embrace voluntarily the tranquil course of life and steady labour necessary to success in the cultivation of the soil; and he is as certainly deficient in that knowledge of the art which, by making its free pursuit attractive, might change his habitual inclination, and ultimately render the occupation both agreeable and profitable. Moreover as serfdom could not be introduced into Siberia, where it never existed save in the case of a few domestic servants, it is probable that only in searching for and encouraging emigrants from countries less thinly populated than Russia, and of a race which could not conveniently, at least for a long period, mingle with the Siberians, the object might at the present day be accomplished. Out of the 10,000 criminals and vagabonds that annually cross the Ural Mountains, it is most probable that not a hundred have either the knowledge or the disposition necessary to the success of agricultural pursuits. In this vicinity, however, it must be confessed, the efforts of the most steady and skilful husbandmen would not be productive of adequate results. The frost here never wholly leaves the earth, though the surface thaws to various depths, depending upon the particular position of the ground. In places sheltered from the north winds and covered with deep banks of snow in the winter, and exposed to the rays of the sun in summer, the ground thaws to the depth of three, and sometimes four feet. But in places that have not this advantage, it does not thaw more than from one to two feet, and even in some cases not more

than a few inches, according to the more or less dry or moist character of the soil. Even here, however, as I had myself the opportunity of seeing some proofs upon spots of ground from which the snow had drifted, the soil is excellent, as well within the town as throughout the country around, save a scanty gravelly portion which borders the river.

Some of the better houses of the town have gardens. The cherry, however, was the only fruit that was cultivated. It is very good preserved, though small. Of the culinary vegetables, some grow very fine cabbages, radishes, and a few of a small kind of beans and peas. When the nature of the soil, then, is considered, and the extreme heat during the short time that the summer endures, here it is evident that more skill to adapt the culture of the soil to the character of the climate would be found much to increase its present scanty production.

The causes of the uncertainty attending the progress of this city, above alluded to, lie rather in its geological than its eastern or western position, or its latitude. Placed upon the banks of the river, in a narrow valley between two ranges of sterile hills, it is subject to very high winds at all seasons, which render it both unhealthy and disagreeable as a place of residence. In summer, clouds of sand and dust sweep through the town with such violence as to render it almost impossible for the inhabitants to stir abroad; and in winter the snow is in perpetual motion; and very often some of the houses are absolutely buried by the drift, when there is not enough snow upon the open ground for the *sani* to run upon. These are matters so important to a town in a climate like that of Siberia, that it is thought they are sufficient in themselves to warrant a belief that the career of Krasnoyarsk will be short. And when we remember, also, the uncer-

tainty of the duration of the present produce of the mines, which is its proper support, the improvidence of the wealthy inhabitants, in squandering away millions of rubles upon a church in the aisles of which the wolf may howl and the bear promenade in security before a couple of generations have passed away, will be tolerably apparent.

I must mention here a further proof of the malicious character of some of the inhabitants of the town, by which I was a little disconcerted during my stay at Krasnoyarsk. Notwithstanding the hospitality and kindness that I had continually experienced at the hands of the better classes of the Siberians, I was never indeed without apprehension of some trick being played, by some one among the bad portion of the population, to arrest my further travels. A spy, I had been over and over again very politely termed; and although words are but breath, such as these often indicate premeditated acts. I knew, indeed, while I was at Tomsk, that some officious persons had reported to the chief of the police, that they had full proof of this important piece of news, that the foreigner had been seen in his room writing—notes of course—and which could be about nothing good. I was told, however, by my friends, that all this was not worth regarding; and that if my steps were arrested, it would be by a messenger called a *feld-jager*, directly from Russia Proper, in the same manner that had been done in the case of my countryman the blind traveller, Holman, after his arrival at Irkoutsk; and the reception I continually met with every where assured me that my friends were right. But during my stay in this place, while I was one evening sitting very tranquilly with my friends over tea and the *chiboock*, a guest who entered reported that he had just come from the house of my first acquaintances at Krasnoyarsk, where it was con-

fidently said that a *feld-jäger* had passed hastily through the town on his way to arrest an Englishman, whom he expected to find at Irkoutsk, to which he was travelling. This report at first seemed absurd, from the apparent impossibility of the messenger passing through the town in ignorance of any information that it was his duty to obtain; and he might certainly have learned here, that there was an Englishman in this town, and, also, that there was not one of our countrymen at Irkoutsk. Yet when the matter was discussed, it appeared probable enough; as this was quite certain, that the letters I had written to St. Petersburg all mentioned my immediate departure from wherever I was writing, for Irkoutsk; and in case of that town alone being mentioned in the *feld-jäger's* instructions, he would not stop at any other, even if he met the very man for whom he was in search, face to face in the street. Nevertheless, as I did not, either there or any where else, encounter any such messenger of ill-offices, the malicious report must be put to the account of the *debauchés* at the *conditorei* over their champagne.

After a fortnight passed among my good friends at Krasnoyarsk, I had every thing prepared for the prosecution of my journey towards the capital of Eastern Siberia. I had been much embarrassed about the manner in which it might be most advisable to travel. I had had quite enough of the method last tried, and I was determined to be at least independent. It was impossible, however, to procure an interpreter or servant of any sort. The sole means that I could adopt, was to travel in my own equipage, and trust to the little I knew of the tongue, and to the chance of finding the *chinovnik* at the government posts more accommodating than my experience, indeed, led me to expect. I now provided myself, therefore, with a *sani*; but before I had time to make my arrangements, a

a French gentleman, formerly an officer in the French army, but who had been many years living at Irkoutsk, with his wife a Russian lady, and keeping an institution for education, happened to arrive; and, as I had a seat for him, an arrangement to travel together suited us equally, and was easily concluded.

I took leave of my Krasnoyarsk friends with the same regrets that I had parted from those of a longer acquaintance in the town of my previous sojourn. Gospodin Vassilliefski and his amiable lady exacted a promise that I would stay with them again, and as long as possible, in case of my return, which was at this time uncertain; and every one that has been herein mentioned, expressed a hope of my making another stay among them.

In one particular case, the parting was not without a touch of that feeling which springs from the sense of the obligations that we owe to one another, which not all the snows of Siberia, nor the storms of this inhospitable region, can extinguish: it was, however, short. I had already taken leave of the exile above mentioned, whom I had frequently visited; but it had been in the midst of his family and some friends. While, however, I was spending my last tranquil half-hour with the excellent family with whom I had been staying, this gentleman entered. He had not been satisfied with our previous parting, and wished to say more than the opportunity had then admitted. Time, however, did not now allow of many words; yet I shall never forget those which dropped from him during the interview. And, as he let go my hand, which he had pressed to his bosom, and was in the act of closing the door by which we stood, his last words, which he spoke with effort, were, "Remember the Exile!"

CHAP. XXXII.

JOURNEY FROM KRASNOYARSK TOWARDS IRKOUTSK.

Danger of neglecting Precautions against Cold.—Fine clear Weather.—Excessive Cold.—The Villages.—Wolf-chase on Snow-shoes and on Horseback.—Fox-chase.—Superior Cunning of the Fox.—Siberian Method of taking the Animals.—The Villages.—Poverty of the Inhabitants.—Consequences of our Negligence in providing.—*Stchee* of Horse-flesh.—Inhospitable Treatment in a small Town.—Charity of three Women.—Recommence the Journey.

When I recounted to my friends, after my arrival at Krasnoyarsk, all the little accidents of the journey from Tomsk, I was thought fortunate in having encountered milder weather than the average at this season, and strongly advised to be in all respects better prepared upon the next occasion.

When long exposed to the higher degrees of cold in this rigorous climate, not only does the face run the risk of a scalding, but the feet become exposed to more serious injury, from our being apt to keep less watch over them, and from the insidious character of the cold. This real enemy, as he increases in strength, increases in the same proportion in treachery, and is much more dangerous to the extremities than to the parts of the body which, being sometimes necessarily exposed, we are always the more careful to watch over. No precautions, therefore, were on this occasion neglected by my new companion and myself; that our experience taught us were necessary, or that were recommended by any of the older travellers in Siberia; and all being prepared, we entered our *sani* late in the

evening, according to the custom of the country; and, after bidding our friends who were assembled at Gospodin Vassilliefski's, a warm adieu, we commenced our journey.

The night was clear and light, but the cold was more intense than I had before experienced it while travelling. We had, indeed, observed, that the thermometer stood at 30 degrees of frost as we entered the *sani*. After leaving the town, we found the snow more equally laid and the ways good; and we slept at intervals during this night, without experiencing any inconvenience. We changed twice before day-light, and arrived early in the morning at the village of Balaiskaya, where, upon alighting, we found the thermometer risen to 28 degrees.

On the second day, we passed several villages, similarly placed to those mentioned upon former journeys, but generally more wretched in appearance, and certainly inhabited by a poorer class of the population. The country presented the same aspect that we had observed to prevail in the immediate vicinity of Krasnoyarsk, and was hilly, and apparently productive only of the spruce-fir and the cedar, which were very scantily sown upon the sides of the hills. We took our mid-day meal to-day at Borodinskaya.

On the third day, we arrived at a miserable village called Verhnéingaschinskaya, where, although we found horses, we were not even able to obtain a *samovar*. The face of the country was now, however, improving at every step; and by the afternoon, we were passing a tolerably wooded tract, of which the trees for the most part were the cedar, the lime, and the silver birch. In the afternoon we dined at Poimskaya, and late in the evening we supped at Polowino Tcheremhofskaya.

We had during to-day a little adventure which afforded us an hour's amusement. As we were crossing a

valley, we observed upon the side of a hill, and upon the road before us, a lone wolf making his meal upon some dead carcass, and we determined to make an attempt to get his skin for our future use. We therefore, prepared our fire-arms, and drove very slowly on, that we might give as little alarm as possible. The wolf, however, appeared to be well accustomed to the ways of men; for, before we were within shot of him, he walked leisurely towards a wood that was near the road; but the wood happening to be here without firs, and the birches to be scantily sown, every thing invited us to commence a chase. We chanced, too, to have three pairs of snow-shoes, though these are rarely carried by travellers, as they are hardly ever used, save where they may be easily obtained. With the use of them, the wolf, when the snow is deep, may be sometimes even easily approached and killed. As soon as we had made all our preparations, we followed the retreating enemy in open order; but, after half an hour's staggering in the snow, which was wholly too light to give us the advantages we had hoped to obtain over the animal, we were obliged to fire out of reasonable distance, and for the present to return. At the suggestion of the *yemstchik*, however, we tried yet another means of pursuit. Our conductor thought that the snow was not so deep, but that the horses might get a firm footing off the road; so we untackled them, and each mounted one; and, we now plunged into the snow off the road, and commenced a new chase, pitching and heaving like a boat in a head sea, or like a fish on dry land. We nevertheless did better in this way than with our snow-shoes; and the wolf, which stood quietly watching us till we reached the spot where we had before turned, now finding he must be more in earnest in his retreat than before, or he would be taken, began to do his best to get away. Sometimes we gained upon him; but near

the trunks of trees, he found here and there, little harder morsels of snow that enabled him to recover his distance, which he contrived should be always out of gun shot. Thus, after about an hour's amusement, we were obliged to give up this chase, as we had done the last.

The next morning we had another chase on our snow-shoes after a fox that we found occupied in tearing another frozen carcass of a horse. We had no chance, however, of enriching our stock of furs on this occasion. The character of cunning or intelligence is certainly not attributed to this animal without sufficient reason. The fox walked away as we approached him, in the same leisurely manner that the wolf had done the day before; but he kept always a tree in his wake in respect to the party nearest to him, and he trod so gingerly upon the snow that it bore his lesser weight very well. Our *yemstchik* had killed many of both these animals after overtaking them in the manner we attempted; and he had found the fox always the most difficult to get at, from the superior art of that animal. His plan was, to frighten them and make them attempt to run, in doing which, they sink in the snow as they step; and, when this is not so deep as it was on the present occasion, if the snow-shoe fails, from the same cause that it failed with ourselves in our chase after the wolf, the horse overtakes them. He rarely used any thing but a stick to kill even the wolf, but avoided approaching too near the chafed animal, until he had obliged him to exhaust his strength by his struggles in the snow. We tried to frighten the fox by firing at him; but he did not hasten his pace a jot, and we were soon foiled and obliged to give up the chase.

The villages were here at distances of from thirty to thirty-five versts from one another, and so wretched and so badly supplied with provisions for both man

and horse, that travellers not provided with an independent stock of comestibles, have sometimes to support a rather inconvenient degree of hunger, and many horses of the caravans fall upon the road. When we left Krasnoyarsk, although we had taken every precaution against the great general enemy, the cold, we had not so fully considered the claims of the stomach to a provision against its particular wants. Our bread and meat were always frozen when we alighted to take our meals; and the necessity of trusting them out of our hands to get thawed, with the unpleasantness, moreover, of collecting the scraps to carry away from a house where we knew we should have been fed upon beef-steaks with a hearty welcome, if such food could have been obtained, had made us very incautious; so that our stock had diminished much faster than we had calculated upon; and when we stopped in the middle of the fourth day at the village of Oukofskaya, we had eaten nothing since the sun rose, and were glad to find a brave mess of *stchee*, of which we partook heartily. We found the taste of our accustomed dish, however, to-day peculiar; and after we re-commenced our journey, some doubts and conjectures arose in our minds concerning what we had been eating, which soon had a tolerably clear solution, by the *yemstchik* pointing out to us the marks of the axe upon the frozen carcass of a horse lying within a quarter of a verst of the site of our feast. There was nothing, however, to complain of, but the uncertainty concerning the course of the viand from life to the *stchee* kettle. We had the same dish several times offered us at the villages where we stopped; and we were only prevented by this uncertainty, from making on these occasions a hearty meal, although we had procured ourselves some good rye bread at one of the villages, and were above absolute want.

Before midnight, we arrived at the small town of

Nijhni Oudinske, where we received worse treatment than I had at any time before experienced since first touching the soil of Russia. The gold mania which has afflicted the larger towns of Siberia, and corrupted the manners of the inhabitants, has converted the smaller towns, where the example of an educated class is wanting, into very seats of depravity and ill-manners. When the traveller arrives in any one of these newly-formed centres of districts, which is just beginning to assume the dignity of a town, his very best policy is to get out of it as soon as he can; for he may be certain, unless it be a happy exception, which indeed is to be found, that he will meet nothing to recompense his stay. This my companion knew very well by experience, and myself by report. We drove, therefore, directly to the post station, in hopes of being able to procure horses to continue our journey as usual. As we had not yet had any difficulties at the stations at which we stopped, but, on the contrary, every facility, we did not expect any thing of the kind on this occasion. And as to the people of the town, we trusted we should not be under the necessity of requiring any thing at the hands of any of them. On our arrival, however, at the post-house, we were told, in reply to our application for horses, that there were none at present in the town, and that there were not likely to be any before the next day; and to our request, which was made at the suggestion of the *yemstchik*, who did not know where to lodge us, and the cold was intense, that we might remain the night in the apartments of the station, we received a positive denial. Our *yemstchik* now, therefore, drove us to a house at a very short distance from that at which we had stopped, where he had some hopes of procuring a lodging, but how well founded we shall see.

The answer returned to the *yemstchik's* demand after

knocking at the door of this house, was, "Who are your passengers?"

"Two gentlemen," was the reply.

"Are they *chinovñik*, or are they from the mines?" was then demanded.

The *yemstchik* now applied to us to know what answer he should give to this question, and was instructed to say that we were neither of these, but foreigners, detained for want of horses, and houseless, and would willingly pay for a lodging. The answer, however, to this was, "We have no accommodation for strangers; they must go elsewhere."

The *yemstchik* now drove us, not a little chagrined at this rebuff, to another house, into which he thought we had a chance of obtaining an entrance. But here the reply we obtained, in answer to our application, was the question: "Are the gentlemen decorated?" meaning, with some one or more of the insignia of rank, which it is common to count by some half-dozen together upon the coat of a good Russian, even though he be not of very exalted rank; and this being answered in the negative, we were again told that we must go elsewhere.

At another and another house, I know not how many, we tried by the same means to obtain admittance, and with the same success. At several of them, indeed, we received unmeasured abuse for waking up the inhabitants.

At length, while we were driving up one of the streets, we met a fellow in a *schouba*, the quality and form of which indicated rank above that of the peasant class at least; but in this, though it might have been a sign elsewhere that we should find within the furred skins at least a spark of humanity, we had not much trust here. Nevertheless, we accosted him very civilly with a request that he would lead us to some house

where we might pass the night. But in reply, we received from him such abuse as could come alone from the mouth of a drunkard; and, in effect, we found we had encountered and asked the aid of a drunken foreign exile, who was going home from some midnight revel. Nothing could have been more brutal than this man's conduct. However, we knew not the circumstances of his life, and how far his brutality, had we known his history, might have been accounted for or excused.

Soon after this, we met another foot-passenger, whose skins indicated also some rank or other. Him we likewise accosted, but with some increased mistrust after the last rebuff, informing him of our wants and our treatment at the station. He made at least more particular inquiries who we were, and condescended to hold quite a parley with us, during which our *yemstchik* informed us that we were talking with no less a personage than the *gorodnichii*, or chief of police of the town. At this our spirits rose at once from the zero to which cold and disappointment had reduced them, to the full summer heat of hope; and as we knew that it was even this man's duty, if, as we doubted not, he was really the personage he was taken for, to provide us with quarters, already we felt in imagination the reviving influence of the brave Russian *amossor*. To our surprise, however, the *gorodnichii* (if such he really were, but which we had not afterwards the opportunity of ascertaining) had no sooner heard our story, than he gave the *yemstchik* two or three hearty curses, that wanted no knowledge of the tongue they were uttered in to comprehend, and went his way, leaving us with even less hope than ever.

We again tried several of the houses, without knowing by whom they were inhabited, but with the same success as before. And now the good *yemstchik* and my fellow-traveller reasoned together about our position,

which was becoming worse and worse every moment. My fellow-traveller proposed that we should drive on to the next village. But this the *yemstchik* stoutly opposed by unanswerable reasons. The distance, he stated, exceeded twenty versts, and his horses, which were now as white with the frost as the snow upon which they trod, were already fatigued; and thus it would take above two hours to accomplish the journey; and this was a longer time than we could remain exposed to the cold, which he declared to be at 40 degrees, without a certainty of serious injury.

In our present position, there appeared to be but a single resource, which was to break open one of the houses and enter by force. But upon a suggestion being imparted to the *yemstchik* to this effect, by my companion, our more prudent conductor said it might be very well if we could find any house that we knew to be only inhabited by women, whom we might first conquer by force and afterwards conciliate by good words; but that, if we attempted to storm any house where there were men, without taking into account the consequences which might follow the breach of the law, we should at once come to a regular battle with our deadly weapons under great disadvantages on our side; and if we got in whole, we should assuredly lie down to rest and rise the next day homicides, and be flogged and stamped, and sent to the mines at Nertchinsk. In fact, he thought, that, notwithstanding our necessitous condition, we were not serious when we proposed such an alternative; and he added, that if we were serious, he would rather lie down in the snow and perish than join in the attempt.

Nevertheless, the suggestion seemed as if it might prove a happy one; for when the *yemstchik* spoke of finding houses only defended by women, it occurred to us, that if a house, inhabited only by women, were

indeed to be found, its fair tenants might not have lost all their humanity, nor perhaps require even threats to induce them to unbar the door; and our conductor was directed to try and find in reality some domicile inhabited by a party of the fair sex alone.

"It is no use knocking at any more houses," said the *yemstchik*, as soon as the proposition had been communicated to him. And he now somewhat reproachingly told us, that the condition to which we were reduced was owing entirely to ourselves, and that all arose from our want of sufficient acquaintance with the Russian tongue to pass for Russians. "I have told the inhabitants of a dozen houses," said he, speaking now in a tone of voice that indicated a lively sense of the danger to which we were now exposed, "that you are both decorated, and of high rank; but I have not been believed, or it would have been otherwise. Could you but have shown a uniform, or have demanded entrance in any house in good Russian, we should not have been refused." Nevertheless, "Knock again," we said, as we both descended from the *sani*, to afford any aid that might be required; and if it be useless to ask admittance, tell every one of whom you have gained the ear, that you are in search of some maiden aunts of your own, that live alone, and whom you have not seen for many years; and beg them to point out any house likely to be that for which you are in search.

This manner of carrying out the suggestion now took such firm hold of the fancy of the *yemstchik*, that he ran and knocked at once at the house that was nearest to us, where he was presently answered, as roughly as usual, from within. The question which we had suggested, was now, however, immediately put. But whether the inhabitants suspected our object or not, a parley now took place, which lasted long enough to determine the fate of a fortress. Never-

theless, it ended in the *yemstchik* being actually directed to a house where there were said to be no inhabitants but women.

This was at least another glimmer of hope for us; and we drove off in search of the feminine-garrisoned castle. It was at a short distance, and easily found. And as our conductor now jumped from his seat, we instructed him to knock very gently that he might not cause any alarm. This mandate he obeyed; but he was not answered until he had given a second and a third knock, somewhat louder. Now, however, a voice, most assuredly that of one of the fair sex, was heard, and another parley commenced between the parties within and without. It was, however, upon this occasion, of short duration; and the *yemstchik* now turned to inform us, that as soon as he had made known our necessitous condition, he was desired to tell us that we were quite welcome to take up our quarters here for the night, and that it was only begged of us that on entering we would be quick, and allow as little cold as possible to enter the house, as the *amossor* had not been heated since the previous morning.

I confess I never saw any one in such an ecstasy as that into which our delighted *yemstchik* seemed now to pass. As we alighted, he threw himself upon the snow, and kissed our feet, as if some special good, of which we were the authors, had befallen himself alone. Then rising, he ran and hugged his horses by the neck, and now blessed the Virgin and all the saints as warmly as it would have been possible for him to do, had they sent him a passport to pass the gate of Paradise unquestioned.

Nor shall I easily forget my impression of our first moments after entering the charitable asylum. Two of three good women that had risen from their beds, were already as busy as the humming insect, to which we

usually compare the industrious, one of them in sweeping one side of the room to lay down our beds, and the other in preparing the *samovar* for our tea; and the third now came and aided us in disencumbering ourselves of our *schoubas*.

As soon as the *samovar* was placed upon the table, we sat down upon benches, and after obliging our benefactors to join us, drank away of the sober beverage together, while a *stchee* was warming on the *amossor*. And now, when we were warm and comfortable, and glorying in our good fortune, my companion began to give our true friends an account of the treatment we had received since we entered the town. In the meantime, the *yemstchik*, who had conducted his horses to the station yard, reappeared, and sitting down upon one of our beds, which were laid out upon the ground, while he drank of the tea also, gave them an account of the invention that we had been driven to, by which he had happily, however, as my friend translated the expression which he used, "found his angelic aunts."

The account of the *yemstchik* caused such a flow of mirth and good humour among the Russian women, as could only have been excited by a degree of natural wit upon the side of the narrator, which we had to regret we could not appreciate.

After our tea, we supped heartily upon beef *stchee*, and now prepared for bed. But upon our good friends offering to wash our feet, we were reminded that it was time to examine very closely whether the demon frost had crept in any form beneath our furs, and left any traces of his visit; and we now found, indeed, in both our cases, what we were quite unconscious of until this moment, that the insidious enemy had been there, although the time had not allowed of his effecting much mischief. My companion had had his feet near the

verge of serious injury; for they were now in a state called by the Siberians *zazobina*, which is a condition of torpor that precedes the positive possession of the frost, and often actually endures for a long time. A part of one of mine, too, was in the same state, as well as a large portion of the flesh on the front of one of my legs above the knee: and of neither of these little inconveniences did I get perfectly rid, until I had been afterwards for some time in a tropical climate. My companion had, indeed, felt a little cold in the part he now found affected, but which he thought too slight to regard, though myself had absolutely felt nothing. Thus it may easily be conceived what the consequences of an exposure for another hour would have been. What we experienced we thought however, might serve as a fortunate accident, in warning us against allowing ourselves to be caught again in a small new town at night, if at any time we could avoid it; and we went satisfied to bed, and slept soundly for the remaining hours of darkness.

Very shortly after sun-rise, our *yemstchik* went off in search of horses. He soon found them; and we rose, took tea again with our benefactors, and some good *stchee*; and after commending the "angelic aunts" to the protection of the Virgin and all the saints, and bowing to their household saint in the holy corner, which it would not have been decent to neglect, we once more entered our *sani* and departed.

CHAP. XXXIII.

JOURNEY FROM KRASNOYARSK TO IRKOUTSK—*continued.*

Weather clear and cold.—Further Consequences of the Rascality of the *Chinovnik.*—Dangerous Position.—The Villages.—Passed a Manufactory of Salt.—Arrival at Irkoutsk.—Observations concerning the Cold.—Great Caution necessary.—Question concerning special Providence.—Calm at low Temperature.—Tea better than Brandy.—Our Cognac a good Thermometer.—Inconvenience of the Ice about the Face.—Effects of the Cold on the Head.—Vapoury Atmosphere.—Suppositions concerning the Aurora Borealis.

THE sky was without a cloud as we recommenced our journey on the morning after our adventure and dangerous exposure to cold. There was no perceptible difference in the temperature of the atmosphere since the evening; and we renewed our usual rapid pace, with the sun shining in our faces, and comfortably reclining, well enveloped as usual in our abundance of furs. But before we had proceeded many versts, and while we were yet full of self-congratulations for the fortunate termination of our troubles of the past night, we found ourselves exposed to the consequences of another piece of rascality on the part of the *chinovnik*, who conducted the business at the post station in the town, by which we now had as narrow an escape from broken necks, as we had had during the night from the worst effects of the cold.

One of the horses that had been given us, had scarcely before been in harness, and he became in a short time unmanageable, and communicated his spirit to the other two; and they now dashed down an

inclined way, which we commenced descending soon after leaving the town, at such a mad speed that, although this would have been of little moment upon even ground, now, owing to the character of the road, soon brought us into peril. We had, as we lay tranquilly reclining, for some time observed the *yemstchik* trying to arrest the speed of his horses by the rein and soothing words; but we did not so much as dream of danger, as we glided rapidly down the inclined way. It did occur to me, indeed, as the *yemstchik* continued his efforts to arrest the course of his horses in vain, that it would be as well to see what was before us, but finding some difficulty when I attempted to rise, by reason of the manner in which we were packed, and being unwilling to change my position, I remained still, enjoying the exciting effects of our rapid flight through the air. My companion, too, remained equally indifferent or pleased; and the *yemstchik* spoke only to the horses, though his language was intelligible enough to both of us. But presently the *sani* struck violently against a rocky bank, and knocked off one of our *otvodi*, or fenders; and as we were thus threatened with an overthrow, we both rose from our reclining position, when we perceived we were just approaching a steeper declivity, and no doubt a deep ravine, and that it was time to aid the *yemstchik* to stop, if it were possible, the course of his fiery steeds. The ungovernable young animal that had inspired his fellows in the race, was upon the side of my companion, who, as soon as he plainly saw the character of the ground before us, started forward, and seizing the single rein on his side with both hands, fell back in the *sani*, and by this means threw the beast directly on his side upon the ground, and the vehicle was thus suddenly stopped, and we alighted.

It was not, however, until we were out of the *sani*, that we were fully aware of the danger from which the

strength and quickness of my companion had rescued us. But upon a view of the ground before us, we had now at least as much reason as before, to congratulate ourselves on our escape; for we were within a short distance of a portion of the road that, on account of its position, the disabled *sani* could not have passed without upsetting, when, as it was now evident from the nature of the ground, we should have rolled altogether headlong down the declivity into a deep ravine, without a chance of either man or horse escaping destruction.

We changed horses at the village of Kirguitouiskaya, and at several other villages during the day; but alighted once only towards evening at the village of Cheragoulskaya, where we supped upon tea and our own black bread after thawing it, there being nothing to be obtained of the peasants but some bread, which was more like pieces of decayed stumps of trees, than any thing I ever before saw used for human food.

The day after that upon which we left Nijhni Oudinske, we breakfasted at Kimilteïskaya. The face of the country continued to present the same invariable undulations, with a scanty covering generally of dark stunted firs, at intervals relieved by a greater or less mixture of the lighter-coloured pine, and a few silver birches. In the evening of this day, we took our *samovar* at Tcheremhoffskaya.

The next day, we passed a manufactory of salt, at the distance of ten vérsts from Biliktouiskaya, where we stopped in the middle of the day, and had once more some tolerable *stchee;* and the same evening, being the 18th of January, and which completed the eighth day from our departure from Krasnoyarsk, we crossed the River Angara, and arrived at Irkoutsk, the capital of Eastern Siberia, making a distance in that time of 989 versts.

As the cold that was experienced during the latter

part of this journey, as may be seen by the register of the weather at Irkoutsk, which will be found in a subsequent chapter, was the greatest that was felt in this part of Siberia during the winter of 1847-48, this may be a fit place for a few remarks upon its effect, in respect to the danger and inconveniences with which it is attended in travelling.

It will be seen by the register, that the cold was at 23 degrees on the morning of the day of our arrival at Irkoutsk, and at 38 degrees on the morning which preceded the night of our adventure at Nijhni Oudinske, and at 35 degrees the following morning: and the variations of the temperature were probably the same on the road as in the town in which the register was kept.

Nothing, it has been said, but urgent necessity induces travellers in Siberia to commence a journey when the cold is at an extreme like that which we experienced; but once on their way, nothing but a violent snow storm and drift arrests their progress. We were, however, though not unexpectedly and unprepared, subjected to this extreme, as well as to the necessity of continuing the journey. We had, indeed, been quite sensible of the superior degree of cold we experienced to that which we had at any time before encountered; but nothing had been neglected to secure our safe passage from village to village; and the only risk that we ran, arose out of the circumstances above described. At all times we wore furred boots, and two distinct *schoubas*, the under one being of sable and the upper of the skin of the bear. And besides these, a covering of sheepskin was thrown over us as we reclined, and our feet were placed again in bags, which we obtained of the peasants on the road, made of the furred skin of the deer, which is by many said to be, but certainly without reason, the warmest of all the furs of which we rob the beasts to cover us. The bear certainly furnishes us

with the best guarantee against the cold. The wolf has the next claim to our gratitude; and probably the deer, and the marten (which furnishes us with the sable), may dispute the claim, upon the whole, for superior service done to their destroyers.

Many men attribute at least all unexpected events to some special providence, whether to warn us against particular dangers, or to reward or punish us, or to determine our actions—

> "There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them as we will;"

and there are others who think we are yet too low in the scale of creation, whatever we may be hereafter, to be worthy of such particular regard At any rate it is certain that some little test we had of the effects of the frost a day or two before we arrived at Nijhni Oudinske, served to excite us to fresh efforts to fence out the great enemy: and we felt assured that the accidental addition that we made to our furs saved us from the loss of our feet.

It is well known, that after the degree of cold bordering upon that at which the mercury freezes or ceases to indicate the temperature, it is invariably calm. Not a breath of air fanned our faces, from the time we quitted Nijhni Oudinske, till we reached our destination.

The effects of the cold, as far as my experience reaches, I feel confident in stating, will be greater upon any part of the body exposed to wind when the thermometer indicates 20 degrees of frost, than when the air is still and the thermometer indicates 35 degrees, or even more. It is of course generally considered dangerous to sleep in the open air during the extreme cold, and the same, indeed, in any apartment not warmed with artificial heat; and we, therefore,

always, at night especially, partook unsparingly of the wakeful beverage from the *samovar* to prevent as much as possible any tendency to falling unconsciously into too drowsy a mood; and this was the more necessary, since we had not the resource of conversation, which was almost impossible, as our ears were enclosed, like the rest of our bodies, within thick coverings of fur. We had provided ourselves with a single bottle of cognac upon leaving Krasnoyarsk, which in some measure replaced our thermometer, after the mercury had frozen. That we might not lose this advantage, and perhaps the services of our *yemstchik*, should he not be superior to temptation, and at a time that they were indispensable, I kept it in the pocket of my upper *schouba*. Notwithstanding this, however, it indicated, with seeming regularity, the changes of the temperature from hour to hour, or stage to stage. It was not indeed at any time frozen into a solid lump; but even where it was placed, with a sheepskin above my upper *schouba*, it became a crystallised mass, and always came from the bottle when we examined its state more or less coagulated. Upon the morning, indeed, which succeeded the night of our adventure at Nijhni Oudinske, we could not get any of it from the bottle before it had been subjected to artificial heat. Thus we considered the relative cold so well indicated by the state of our cognac, though mingled with what proportion of water we knew not, that we watched it, and examined it every time the opportunity arose with scarcely less faith and interest than the mariner watches the rising and falling of the barometer during tempestuous weather at sea.

Among the many inconveniences to which the traveller in this cold region is subjected, and which happens, more or less at any degree of temperature below about 10 or 12 degrees, is the freezing, as it is called, of the breath upon every thing around that portion of

the face which is exposed. When, however, the cold is not much greater than that above mentioned, this is of little consequence; but when the temperature is very low, it becomes an intolerable inconvenience. In the first instance, the face being less covered, the ice is more out of the way; but when it is necessary that only the smallest portion possible of the flesh should be exposed, the ice gathers in such masses round the eyes and the mouth, the two features that support with the least patience any restraint upon the use of their faculties, that respiration and sight, save through a curtain of ice, are obstructed; and, if we sleep, which it is perfectly safe to do, exposed to the cold that may have this effect, we awake probably quite masked in ice.

At first, this inconvenience troubled me the more, that I found the ice actually incasing a portion of the flesh of my face, like a veneering slab of some transparent substance upon an opaque base. I thought that there was danger of the flesh freezing with the ice that covered it, but there was not the slightest. The flesh and the ice are not in reality in contact; and so far from the part covered being actually affected by the frost, the ice being probably at a temperature abundantly higher than the air, becomes rather a protection than a source of danger to the portion of the face which it covers.

There is no remedy for all the inconveniences occasioned by the ice, except in knocking off the lumps and icicles as they form, if we are awake, so as to obtain a free passage for the breath. And it is especially necessary to do this before entering a warm room; otherwise the fur will get soaking wet when we have not time to dry it before we are again exposed; and upon re-entering our *sani*, so much of it will be a hard mass as to prevent our covering ourselves up again with the same comfort as before.

I will mention here an effect of the frost which I experienced when exposed, but which is not usual with the inhabitants. My head, when the cold was at the greatest, was so hot with the mere ordinary fur cap, that often I was obliged to leave the whole above the ears bare for full half an hour at a time; yet from this I experienced no inconvenience. I was not able to discover the proper cause of this effect, and still less why it should be experienced, as it happened to me, at one time and not at another.

The atmosphere had during the whole of the day which preceded the last night of our journey, seemed to be filled with a thin and bright vapour, similar to that which is seen rising from the chimneys in the towns at this season of the year when the fires are alight, and it is calm, and the cold severe. This appearance in the air, covering both hill and vale, is common; but does not take place until the frost, as it is usually considered, even reaches to about 40 degrees. The inhabitants call it a congelation of the air itself.

The sky while we observed this phenomenon, was clear above our heads, and the atmosphere, which, as it has been above mentioned, is invariably the case during extreme cold, was perfectly still; and as the sun set, the silvery vapours became streaked with golden tints, which, before the light was extinct, presented from west to east one gaudy illumination. This phenomenon was particularly interesting to myself; as it so much resembled an appearance I once saw in a northern latitude upon the western continent, covering the whole heavens (and which, there could be no doubt, was the aurora borealis), as strongly to impress me with an opinion, that it was the same with that light which is yet so far from being satisfactorily accounted for by the natural philosophers. Is it not possible, that during the extreme cold in the highest latitudes, that this same dense at-

mosphere may be formed, even at a height sufficient to catch the rays of the sun while below the horizon, and thus become visible in all high latitudes, though subjected to different influences, and presenting a proportionately varied appearance?

While we contemplated this magnificent show, as we glided along our smooth way, it seemed as if it would have been a small thing to sacrifice all the other enjoyments of our travels and still retain the pains, to have a Herschel, a Strüve, or a Rosse with us, even had the philosopher been as incommunicable to his fellow travellers as the monks of La Trappe are to one another.

CHAP. XXXIV.

IRKOUTSK.

Position of the Town. — Importance. — Population. — Buildings. — Schools. — Gymnasium. — Privileges of the Boys. — Sons of Peasants. — Sons of Exiles. — First Evening at Irkoutsk. — The Traveller receives Letters from the English Ambassador. — Letters from Count Nesselrode to the Governor. — Relief from Suspense and Anxiety. — Interview with the Governor. — Installed in good Quarters. — Dinner at the Government-house. — A Cloten of the Siberian Court. — Siberian's Wit. — Mirth. — Visit to the Chief of the Political Exiles.

IRKOUTSK, the capital of Eastern Siberia, is seated at the immediate point of the confluence of the Angara, the most considerable of all the rivers that fall into the Yenessei, and the broad and rapid torrent of the Irkout. It contains a population of 18,000 souls, composed of the same social grades as the population of the town of Tomsk. It is the seat of the government of Eastern Siberia, and the place of residence and head quarters of the governor-general over all the departments which are comprised in the great eastern division of the country. It possesses a handsome cathedral, nine churches, a government-house, and all the ordinary public buildings of a Russian governmental town, and a *gostinnoi dvor*.

There are seven public establishments for education in Irkoutsk, five of which are for the instruction of boys, and two for girls. And there is also an independent seminary for the daughters of parents who can afford and prefer to give their children a private education.

The schools for the boys are of three distinct kinds, with different objects. One of them is designed for the

sons of exiles of every kind, who are, without distinction, obliged by the law to be raised for soldiers. The boys are here educated, but not maintained, at the public charge. Another receives the sons of the *chinovnik*, who are educated, fed, and clothed, at the expense of the crown, in the service of which they are afterwards employed.

Two higher schools have a common object, one of them being but an elementary school of three classes, in which the children are prepared for the gymnasium, or higher school, which has seven classes. In this establishment there are usually about 150 boys, forty of whom are by special privilege under regulations bearing reference to the positions of their parents, maintained as well as educated at the public expense. The scholars are for the most part sons of officers, merchants, and proprietors of mines or their agents. They receive a liberal education, and usually afterwards follow the profession or business of their fathers. Besides the head master, there are fourteen professors; and the branches of knowledge which are taught are the Russian, Latin, German, French, and English languages, geography, mathematics, rhetoric, logic, physics, and drawing. All the boys, even though they should be the sons of peasants (of which there are many among the rest), if they pass a prescribed examination, are equally eligible to advancement, and may enter one of the universities of Russia under certain regulations. Those, for instance, who attain this privilege, but who have been educated at the public charge, are only eligible for Kazan, and are liable to serve the crown for eight years; while those who are educated at the expense of their parents may enter any one of the universities in Russia, according to their objects, the constitution and design of the universities being different; and they are liable for only six years' service.

It must here be remarked, however, that although, strictly speaking, the sons of the political exiles have no higher privilege than those of the criminal, who are ineligible to the higher class schools, the iron letter of the law has yielded to the force of natural claims, and the greater part of these enter the elementary school, which gives equal right to all to pass to the gymnasium, where they wear uniform and receive the fourteenth or lowest grade of nobility, and become, finally, eligible to enter one of the universities of Russia.

The remaining school for boys is exclusively for the sons of the clergy who are designed for the priesthood. At this period it contained no less than 150 scholars. All must have attained the age of fifteen before commencing their theological studies. They remain in the institution for six years; at the expiration of which they are subjected to an examination, and advanced in proportion to the degree of proficiency which they have attained. A few of those who appear to have made the greatest advances in their studies, at the expiration of the prescribed period are transferred to one of the four higher colleges at St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kieff, or Kazan. After this, such as aspire to the rank of bishops, become monks. Those who are next in reputation for their progress at the termination of their studies at the college, become eligible for the ministry; and upon their taking to themselves wives, they are ordained deacons, priests, and ministers. But those scholars who do not acquire such a reputation as is thought sufficient to entitle them to any of these privileges, are employed in the meaner ranks of the clerical order, or as mere assistants in the performance of the ordinary offices of the church.

One of the two public institutions for girls is maintained at the expense of the crown, and admits fifty children free. The other was founded by a million-

naire of Irkoutsk, and admits thirty or forty free. The only private establishment, was in 1848 conducted by the accomplished wife of my last fellow-traveller, as before mentioned.

On our arrival at Irkoutsk, we had driven immediately to the residence of my fellow-traveller, from whose wife I received a most friendly reception, and an invitation to remain till I should be provided with apartments. Madame Richie was the daughter of a French officer who was made prisoner during the memorable campaign of 1812, and who ultimately settled and married in the south of Russia.

This kind lady had been watching for the arrival of her husband with great anxiety, on account of the degree of cold which had for several days prevailed; and her first care was now about our feet, which she insisted we should immediately examine. We were obedient to this mandate; but after the warning we had received, we had been too cautious to leave any part of our bodies exposed to the further attempts of the lurking enemy; and we found ourselves certainly no worse than when we took leave of our kind benefactors at Nijhni Oudinske.

After a good supper, we gave the lady an account of our chief adventures during the journey, and received in return the little news of the town. After which we retired to repose, full of the delightful impression of our security from the enemy whose presence had made us too wakeful to sleep, but at short intervals, during nearly the whole of our journey.

On the morning after our arrival, M. Richie accompanied me to the post office, where I had the satisfaction of finding a letter from Lord Bloomfield, then her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at the Court of Russia, in reply to an application, which it has been mentioned I addressed to his lordship, before

passing the Ural Mountains. His lordship's letter enclosed a despatch from the Count Nesselrode, his Imperial Majesty's first Minister, to Gospodin Piatnitzski, civil governor of Eastern Siberia, and now, in the absence of the governor-general, administering the government in all its departments, and which his lordship informed me, contained every thing for which I had made application, or that might be necessary for my security and protection within the limits of the empire.

Nothing could surpass the pleasure I felt upon this occasion. I was at once relieved from the state of uncertainty and anxiety in which I had been for several months, and amid which it was impossible to form any plan, or to know what a day might bring forth. It was like arriving in port, and bidding adieu to the confined cabin of a leaky ship, when the world seems all before us, and our will once more our sovereign guide.

M. Richie at once volunteered his services to accompany me on a visit to the governor, to whose residence we therefore lost no time in directing our steps. We found his excellency in his office alone. He received us very politely, and after perusing the despatch which I brought with me, he informed me that he was commanded to afford me every facility and protection, and every aid, towards the prosecution of my future travels in any part of his Imperial Majesty's dominions.

The governor now required of us, as is usual in the country, a full account of the accidents of our journey. Lest we might unconsciously injure some innocent parties, we confined ourselves to an account of the effects of the cold, and to our less remarkable adventures. But I could not help letting his excellency know, that it was not the first time I had seen him, and that the previous occasion had been accompanied with somewhat perhaps

wanton enjoyment. And, in explanation of this, I recounted the little adventure, somewhat modified for the security of the parties, in which the peasants had circumvented authority for the benefit of the foreigners, of whom I was one, during our long journey in Western Siberia, on which occasion, as already related, my former fellow-passengers and myself had triumphantly passed him by, while his equipage was sticking fast in the mud. The governor was at first shocked at the conduct of his domestics; but as we had been the triumphant party, the anecdote served only to afford amusement, and for a good hearty laugh, as well on the present as on several future occasions.

The next morning I received a communication from his excellency, to say that the police, whom he had sent at our request in search of a dwelling for me, had found a house of the description I required; and as a friend I had already made, brought me a young Russo-Siberian, who had been trained in the family of one of the higher class of political exiles, and was accustomed to domestic service, I immediately engaged him, and lost no time in taking possession of my new home.

My dwelling proved a neat little painted house in the principal street, and comfortable and warm; and although I had no interpreter, I trusted that, with the little I had by this time picked up of the tongue of the country, allowing for the natural intelligence of the people, that I should get on fairly enough.

The day after I was installed in my new abode, I received an invitation to dine at the government-house, where I met a very polite and friendly reception.

A very agreeable mixed party sat down to a repast of the usual plentiful variety of solids and delicacies of the Russian table. Among the company, there were officers lately arrived from the distant outposts of the government, several of the *chinovnik* of the higher

grades belonging to the town, and one or two gentlemen from among the mining class of the population, and one lady, who was the superintendent of the public institution for the education of young ladies. The principal conversation of the table was carried on in the Russian tongue; but as several of the party spoke French, among whom, one who sat near me volunteered his services as interpreter, it was not quite lost to me.

Among the company, there was a single guest of a class quite apart from any I had before met with, and such as might be a rarity in society in any country in the present age, and ought not therefore to be passed by unnoticed.

After the conquests made by civilised nations, as we Europeans deem ourselves exclusively, and the subjection of the barbarians that have lived, some under one form of government, and some under another, the appropriation of their territory, the destruction of their gods and temples, which had hitherto formed the nucleus of all that retained them in a state of society, and the almost total disappearance of the vanquished, some monument, in a less or greater number of the departed race, is nevertheless usually found, even in the most populous towns of the conquerors, though it be but in the form and figure of a single man, who remains hardly possessed of enough of the essential element of our common nature, to be held responsible for his actions or words. To this remnant of the race departed, the motives and the interests of life have disappeared, and left a void in the brain as abhorrent to nature, as a vacuum in the material world. And such seems to be our inclination to exalt ourselves by the comparison of relative endowments, that men have often acted as if the extinction of every relic of a race which they have reduced almost to a level with the brute tribes, would deprive them of the full enjoyment of

the fruits of their victory. Now, whether this too plain disposition of our nature, were or were not the origin of, and some remains of the conquered races, the sources from which were drawn, the half wits and cracked wits which have sat at court feasts, as well in our own land as in others, even from Cymbeline down to our fourth George, only modified by changes of manners during the intervening ages, I confess I was taken by surprise, at this semblance of the court of a great prince at the extremity of his dominions, to find extant the good old resource for amusing the guests and inmates of the palace, in the person of a sort of cloten of the Siberian Court.

The dinner upon this occasion seemed, in spite of this advantage, and of the mixed character of the guests present, to commence with rather an air of official restraint; but it soon turned to one of the merriest at which I was a guest while in the country. The merriment, however, and the sallies of wit which excited it, were confined chiefly to the centre portion of the table. Our amiable hostess appeared sufficiently occupied with her single guest of her own sex and the strangers, for I was not the only one among the company that might be so termed; and our host, on his side, evidently supported, like another Cymbeline, all the fooleries led by the droll of his primitive court, rather than bent the dignity of his position to join in the mirth of the rest upon the babble of this privileged personage. But though the attempt to reproduce what passed, in the manner in which it reached my ears, would exhibit but a pointless and imperfect discourse, yet I may mention a single sally of the Siberian cloten's humour, if it were such, in which I had at least the satisfaction to find myself the cause that wit or foolery was in other men.

"Governor," said our cloten, who of course knew

that I did not understand the tongue in which he spoke, nor probably that I had an interpreter near me, "I am persuaded, that we have one of those English tourists among us, that travel the world over and report all they see and hear. We must show ourselves in the best possible light, or we shall be thought in Europe no better than Tatars or Kirgeeze. But I will give him a proof that there is civilisation here, as well as in Europe. I will ask him to take wine with me after the fashion of his country. It will go down to posterity, that I drank wine with the tourist, after the most civilised mode, at the table of the emperor's representative in Siberia."

A courtier, seemingly not unacquainted with the art or the policy of flattering a favourite, remarked, addressing himself to our cloten, "Your name will go down to posterity for braver actions than this." Then a significant laugh announced to all who had any brains at all, in what different senses the speech might be understood.

The honour of the challenge to take wine was duly accepted. And if a copy of this report of it, with the rest of the volume, get behind some public or private shelf, and escape the annual sweeping off of ephemeral octavos for some half-dozen years after its date, myself, at least, will be quite satisfied; and I think the Siberian motley, if he should hear of this, ought to be so likewise.

After many gibes and jokes, probably of about the same value as that above reported, we rose; and, the usual compliments paid to the patron saint and the host and hostess, we withdrew to the saloon, where we had coffee and a few further sallies of Siberian wit, and some conversation, for a short half-hour, after which we retired.

As I felt at this time quite secure from the consequences of any suspicion of my objects in Siberia,

arising from a misrepresentation of any thing that it was convenient or agreeable for me to do, I gladly accepted an offer made by my late fellow-traveller the next day, to call with him upon some of the more remarkable of the political exiles, with all of whom he was well acquainted. For the present, however, I shall only observe, that those whom we visited I found living in a degree of ease and comfort, and even of contentment, that I was not prepared to witness. More especial opportunities will occur for some additional remarks to those already made, upon the difference between what in Europe is commonly supposed to be the condition of the exiles in general, and what really has been their condition during the whole of the period of their residence in Siberia.

CHAP. XXXV.

IRKOUTSK—*continued.*

Entertainment at a Merchant's.—Respect paid to Foreigners.—Remarkable Fish.—A learned Pope.—Colonel of the Mining Corps.—A Siberian young Lady's Ideas of Europe.—Impressions of France and England.—Attachment to her Place of Birth.—Supposed Rivalry of France and England.—Russian Customs.—Superstitions.—Persecution of Priests.—Superstitions at Table.—Manner of drinking Tea.—Droll Habit of the Ladies.—Milk after Dinner.—Bad Habits in Conversation.——Difficulty to change habitual Usages.—The Calendar.—Eastern Customs.—Eastern Embraces.—Meeting and taking leave of Ladies.—Suggestions for Improvement.—Siberian Jocosity.—Effects of a Jest.

A FEW days after our arrival at Irkoutsk, I supped by invitation at the house of the chief merchant of the eastern capital, but whose name has been unfortunately omitted in my memorandums, where I met the leading families of the town. We had the usual sumptuous supper of the country, served in the style of the millionnaires among the mining proprietors, with no lack of champagne and other French wines.

This merchant was a thorough Russian in sentiment, and open and hospitable. He was dressed like a St. Petersburg or other European gentleman, and was, by education and the effects of intercourse with the world, of a character far removed above the sordid class of his countrymen in the beard and caftan, in whose hands so fair a portion of the commerce of the land still remains.

Upon this, my first meeting with the principal private

families of Irkoutsk, I was welcomed by a number of those little attentions, commencing by a toast in champagne, which are so gratifying to a stranger wherever he may sojourn, and which become doubly so, when well known to be spontaneous and wholly disinterested. Although, in the present age, in spite of political revolutions, some progress has been made towards uniting all mankind in one great family, and the same good work, it may be hoped, will continue; yet sufficient distinction must ever remain between men of different races and nations, to admit of our being new to one another individually in society: and though the traveller may be solely indebted for all the attentions he receives, to the opinion entertained of his country, while this reflects more honour on those who confer them, it will generally more gratify those who receive them, than if they respected the individual alone.

The details of this entertainment were similar to those that have been mentioned upon other occasions; but there was at least one novelty at the supper. A fish called *comba*, which abounds in the Angara, and is much esteemed by the Siberians, was placed upon the table, and was a perfect show. Its length was between five and six feet, and its girth nearly three feet. Its form resembled that of the sturgeon; nor was it unlike that fish in flavour, though it is found only in fresh water. I confess I never before saw so enormous an animal served or cooked whole, save once an ox roasted at a "mop" in Warwickshire. There was also a *nelmar*, the most esteemed by the Siberians of all the fishes in which their rivers abound, the sterlet alone excepted. Yet it is a dry fish, and not highly flavoured. But it serves well to furnish a favourite dish of the country, which is fish soup.

These and other fishes are caught here with equal facility at all seasons with hooks and lines. In summer,

the fishermen launch out in canoes, and throw out their lines while at anchor, or while paddling against the stream. But at this season they cut holes in the ice, and make the same use of the hook and line.

Among the guests at the merchant's upon this occasion, I had the gratification of meeting a pope, who had lately arrived from Kamtschatka, where he had passed thirteen years. As he spoke a little English, which he had learned from the sailors of English and American whalers that visit the ports of that country, we were able to carry on something like a direct conversation; and I received from him much interesting information, of which I was subsequently able to make practical use.

This pope was considered the most learned of the Russian priests that had been in Siberia; and he was free from that mental inertness which is not uncommon among the clergy of the several Oriental Churches, and is the distinguishing character of a section at least of the Romish among the Western. He had brought with him proofs of his industry during the years he had spent among the semi-savages of the country in a history and description of the great peninsula and of the various races by which it is inhabited, which he intended to forward to St. Petersburg for publication. But he had brought, also, no less forcible proofs of the superiority of the canon law of the Eastern Churches over that of the Church which most resembles them among the Western, in a happy wife and ten children, and a reputation for the domestic virtues, which are surely the most necessary of all the Christian attributes for a priest to possess —

> "Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
> Of purity, and peace, and innocence,
> Defaming as impure what God declares
> Pure;" —

and not less on account of the strength which example must give to precept, than because the father and husband must necessarily know better than the recluse, all the feelings that belong to the several relations of men to one another in society, and be therein the better able to direct the lives of those who most need instruction.

Among my good friends at Irkoutsk, was the Colonel Klyminoof, commanding the mining corps in the service of the government. I met with much politeness from this gentleman, and spent some agreeable evenings in the company of himself and his friends, but conversed very little with him on account of the want of a common language between us. I was, nevertheless, indebted to him for an introductory letter with which he furnished me, when I was about to make an excursion into the country south of Irkoutsk, an account of which will be given before closing this notice of the capital of Eastern Siberia.

Among my friends, also, was Gospodin Roskildahoff, an officer in the civil service of the government in connection with the mining establishments. I was frequently at this gentleman's house; and although deprived of his conversation also for the same reason which deprived me of that of the officer above mentioned — the lack of a common tongue — I had frequent conversations with one of his daughters, who attracted much interest while I was at Irkoutsk, on account of her personal charms and her proficiency in European accomplishments, among which was fortunately a knowledge of the French language.

Perhaps those only among men who have for long periods together been deprived of familiar intercourse with any of the opposite sex, are able to appreciate fully the agreeable feelings which attend the renewal of our wonted interchange of ideas. This young

lady had not from her birth been more than a few versts out of this her native town; and although she was not wholly wanting in a general knowledge of ancient and modern history, yet of all she had read of countries beyond the bounds of the Russian empire, she had received the impression, from every scene described and every fact related, in such colours of romance, that when she spoke of England and France, her questions resembled those which we should ask of a traveller arriving from Arabia, if we had read nothing of Eastern lands save the Thousand and One Nights. To gratify her desire to see these wonderful Western countries, she thought she would sacrifice even a portion of her life; but she declared she could not continue to live happily in any country but Siberia.

But when I asked her whether, when the lovely hills and fresh valleys, with their corn fields, orchards, parks, groves, and green meadows, of which she delighted to talk, might be in reality before her eyes, she might not be tempted to abandon her native Irkoutsk, and even friends and home, she declared her attachment to the place of her birth to be such, that she hardly knew whether, even if her father were called to live in Russia, she could endure an absence from Irkoutsk for above six months. Her curiosity and enthusiasm were chiefly concerning France; and she thought me too national, when I described the aspect of my own country as more like the romantic portraits of the scenery of Western Europe, which her fancy had drawn, than that of the France which she so sighed to behold. She wished very much to hear some words of our language: but when I repeated some verses from "Comus" and the "Rape of the Lock," which have always appeared to me the most melodious of any that I am acquainted with, she was not pleased; and in comparison with French rhymes, which, I confess, have

always seemed to me most monotonous, she thought them harsh and inharmonious.

At an entertainment one evening at the domicile of one of my friends, where a favourite subject of the Siberians not less than of the Russians — the claims of the rival nations, as men are wont to call the French and the English, for pre-eminence in many particulars — was discussed, I was led by the turn of the conversation to make a few remarks concerning the enterprise of our merchants, men of science, and capitalists, upon which a very intelligent Russo-Siberian spake as follows:—

"Gospodin of London," said the Siberian, "the fame which the enterprise of your merchants and other pioneers of civilisation has justly gained you, has reached Siberia. Nevertheless, if we in this country were to be the judges of the superior claims of the two nations to pre-eminence in enterprise, we should say, that in our Irkoutsk, the last town in which any European that is not a Russian subject or exile, is found, not only have we a French merchant; but also a Parisian Professor of the French Language, both pursuing their distinct objects at a distance of several thousand versts eastward of the last place at which you may find, save the Albinos at Tomsk, which is above 1500 versts from this, any Englishman of any vocation whatsoever."

There is scarcely a custom purely national that is observed by the Russians which does not exhibit the same tendency to contrast and to extremes which have been seen in those already mentioned. There has not been wanting occasion to show that the character of the people is eminently religious. There is no Christian nation more thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the religion which they profess. Nevertheless, their priests are, upon some special occasions, shunned even in the streets, and it may be said, persecuted by the very members of the

church for which they perform the offices of religion. Men even above the peasant class, of which, however, we chiefly speak, who are going out upon business of the last moment, will not leave their houses until some one has ascertained that the first passenger they may encounter will not be a priest. Were a stranger to hear this without any of the reasons from which it proceeds, he might set it down as arising from the bad character of the man, who might fear to meet one that may possibly be acquainted with his wickedness. Nevertheless, it is the mere effect of a rooted superstitious belief, that no good fortune will attend any one engaging in any enterprise or business, if the first person that he should happen to meet upon leaving his house, should be a priest. It is very true, that like most other ill-omens, which too often influence the fortunes of poor mortals, this also has its particular exorcism, which may counteract the malignant influence of the evil genius of the priest. The worst however is, that the remedy is not only not agreeable to perform, but even amounts to the persecution of the unoffending priest whom it makes a party in the matter; for the person supposing himself to be affected by the evil influence, can only escape from all its consequences by spitting upon the beard of the priest. There is no doubt, indeed, that there are many good Russians under the influence of this superstition, if the enterprise in which they suppose they must fail be not very great, who are contented to suffer the consequences of their ill-fortune, rather than be guilty of such an abominable act. Still, the condition of a priest in the street, who has to watch continually which way every man turns who chances to come out of the house he is about to pass by, in order that he may avoid the risk of having his beard spat upon, cannot be enviable. If the party coming out, however, be of the fair sex, the remedy for the evil is not quite so

disgusting. It seems to be the impression that women more easily allay all evil influences than men; for it is necessary in their case, only to throw a pin upon the priest's beard, and all the ill-consequences of the encounter are thus easily negatived.

A priest informed me that himself and many others had tried to overcome this senseless superstition, by endeavouring to convince the people that it could only be from meeting any thing evil—if, indeed, what they met signified any thing—that such ill-consequences as they dreaded could proceed; but he said that he believed that their endeavours had had but little or no effect.

Few nations are without some religious or superstitious ceremonies connected with the manner of their taking their meals. The religious ceremonies of the Russians at table have been mentioned; but among the classes in the simpler ranks of life, besides these, some mere superstitions obtain. Among these, is an impression, that if thirteen sit down to table together, one of them will die upon the night which follows. But, notwithstanding the origin of this terror, which is very apparent, though they should be ever so much open to justice or oppression, they neither dread a betrayer, nor any ill to whomsoever may be the marked one among them—that is, no other ill than a transport, and a very tranquil, though very sudden one, from the present to the future state.

They observe towards strangers that enter their dwelling, or pass by their table while they are at their meals, the same courtesy as the Spaniards, with almost as much rigour, in asking them to partake of whatever they may be eating. But their words for this purpose have been, from time immemorial, even though they should be sitting over the richest *stchee*, "Will you eat bread and salt with us?" They are not, however,

always a stiff-necked people in respect to things not directly connected with such portions of their religion as have been subjects of controversy among them. Thus, when they are over their tea, an innovation has grown up, and some change taken place in those all but sacred words which they at other times employ, and they substitute for bread and salt "tea and sugar."

The manner of drinking their tea with sugar, among all but the classes that pretend to some refinement, is different from ours. They sit sipping the tea, and usually out of glass tumblers, without sugar in it; but ever and anon they place a lump of sugar in their mouths, and crunch it between their teeth as they sip. Thus, when half a dozen tea-drinkers are occupied in this manner, the sound is not agreeable to the ear. My friend of Tomsk, so often mentioned, when we were one day taking our tea in the company of some of these people, compared the noise of the teeth crushing the sugar, to that of the mills at the gold works crushing the quartz rock.

Among all classes in Siberia, a habit is very prevalent at table, which, if harmless, is by no means elegant, and might be with advantage abandoned. This general occasion is taken to mention it, expressly to avoid seeming to be particular in the remark, and especially since it is necessary to say that it prevails more commonly among the fair sex. The ladies are, in all that is essential, very delicate at table; but as they sit apart from the gentlemen, and do not usually join in the general conversation, the time is apt to pass very heavily with them, while the courses are delayed either by the capacity of the men's stomachs or the interruptions caused by discourse; and thus they have been driven to discover some means of relieving the weariness of the time, which has led to their acquiring a very droll habit of rolling the damp crumb of the rye bread,

which is excellent for the purpose, into pills. Three or four ladies together may be sometimes seen, quite unconscious how they are occupied, to manufacture of this simple material, with their fingers, during dinner, as many of these pills as would suffice to make half an English quack's fortune without killing a single soul.

In the houses, generally, of the higher portion of the trading and other industrious classes, a glass of milk terminates the dinner. I should have thought it the very worst thing to put upon the solids that preceded it; but I am compelled to pronounce, as far as my experience goes, that it is the very best. I never drank milk to greater advantage than on these occasions, and confidently, therefore, recommend it to all our bibbers in place of red wine and white, which they sit toping till the lady of the house charitably disturbs them by a summons to tea. They may sleep better after it than after wine, and transact their affairs with more ease and pleasure the next day.

Among even well-bred Russians that I have met in Siberia, there exists in society a certain restlessness of mind, rather than want of decorum, properly so designated, which is sometimes productive of inconvenience in the ordinary intercourse of life, but especially in the conduct of social discourse. I have often witnessed interruptions to conversations of interest, that have not seemed either to cause surprise or even disappointment to either of the parties that were engaged in them. One or two instances in point recur to my memory, in which myself was a party to the discourse.

On one occasion, an eye-witness to the burning of Moscow was giving me an animated description of the scenes upon the spot during that calamitous event, when a third party changed the subject, by a single question, to a discussion upon the price and quality of the tea that we happened at the moment to be drinking,

and which appeared to be a matter of too much interest to admit of any ordinary effort bringing the discourse back to the subject from which it was drawn.

I was dining one day at the well-filled table of a hospitable couple at Irkoutsk, when a very warm discussion took place between the host and one of the guests present; and upon retiring to an adjoining apartment, I remarked to the lady of the house, that I thought it very indelicate on the part of their guest to beard a man at his own table in the manner this gentleman—whom, indeed, I thought, wrong in the argument—had just done. The lady replied, "You surprise me by this remark. I believed English manners to be a fit glass for us to set up to dress our own by; but I see you are less polite than we; for with us it is the host that should cede at all times to the guest." At this instant, some call was made upon the attention of the lady; and before I had time to say, that I thought both parties, in every similar case, committed a breach of good manners, our hostess was half across the room; and as the subject from which the discussion arose was not one that it was agreeable to revive, it is probable the lady may still think, and many others with her, that when we are so fortunate as to be hosts in England, we are permitted to worry our involuntarily mute guests as much as we please.

On a particular occasion, I was conversing with an officer of high rank in the emperor's service, when the turn of the conversation led to my making the remark, that the proper mission and true field of enterprise of the Russians was within the bounds of the Chinese empire. The word mission, in the language we were speaking, suggested immediately, as it might have done in our own, and very naturally, its application in a religious sense; and thus my observation seemed to refer to the conversion of the Chinese people to Chris-

tianity. The officer, as if struck with the originality or novelty of the observation, hesitated for an instant, and then replied, "I do not approve of any interference with their religion." And before it was possible to say so much as "Nor I; it is only of European civilisation *generally* that I speak," which I wished to say, a third party drew off the attention of the officer by some question that caused him to rise, which turned the course of the conversation; and no opportunity afterwards offered itself to explain.

In one instance of a similar interruption, the impression left upon the minds of those with whom I was conversing, must have been, that I came to Siberia in search of a land where I might dwell under better institutions than those of my own country. In another case, the impression left might have been, that I was convinced that the Russian was a superior mode of Christian worship to the English.

The arrest of our accomplished and extraordinary countryman, Holman, the "blind traveller," in this country, very probably arose from some misunderstanding of this kind. It was at least commonly said in the towns which he visited, and where he was remembered with much interest, that he was taken out of the country because he described places and objects as if he had seen them. This is indeed his way of expressing himself, though, whenever it is thought necessary, he explains why he does so, if not interrupted, as he doubtless frequently was in Siberia. It would certainly improve social intercourse among the Russians, if this fault, which, as already suggested, is doubtless the offspring of natural impatience of character, were thoroughly reformed.

Upon expressing to a Russian gentleman, when an occasion happened to present itself, my surprise that the intercourse which had so long existed between his coun-

trymen and the rest of the European people, had not led to the introduction of the reformed calendar and the new style into Russia, I received the following reply: "The age," said the Russian "is not yet arrived, when such a change as this could by any means be made. To accomplish it, would require more management and firmness on the part of the government, than would be required to move the entire population into the most Western country in Europe. With the majority of the people, the question would be purely religious, and the change would be considered by them as an attempt to undermine or wholly destroy their religion."

Upon a suggestion being made, that if it were quite a religious question, as the emperor was the head of the church, he might surely, with the aid of the more instructed portion of the clergy, effect such a change, it was answered: "That such is the character of the religious people generally among the Russians, that to change alone the days of the *fêtes* of the saints in the calendar, would appear so monstrous in their eyes, that they would assuredly conclude that the emperor, known by them to have great respect for the rights of these holy personages, had actually gone mad. Nay, it was added, that those who might be reconciled to this, could never be made to understand that any thing but sorcery could circumscribe the year, and shorten the lives, as it would be deemed, of all men living twelve days."

The Russians, besides more important customs, have retained also several of the minor sort; which, though they may still obtain in parts of Germany, France, and Italy, belong properly to an earlier age in European civilisation; and some of them are doubtless of Eastern origin. When, for instance, as we wash ourselves, we find a servant come to pour water upon our hands,

which we shall not fail to do in this part at least of the empire, we are reminded of taking our dinner by a luxurious fountain in a cool and windowless apartment in the south, even though lumps of the frozen element fall from the ewer like masses of ice down the "frosty Caucasus;" and we only wish the water were warmer.

An opportunity has already occurred to mention the custom among the men of rubbing their beards one against another upon meeting and taking leave. At the sacred epoch, at the close of Lent, a custom prevails among the people of all classes without distinction, of calling upon one another and embracing, and kissing, as the French would say, *à trois reprises*, in compliment of course to the Trinity; and certainly, if I had not this Easter my fair proportion of the scratching of beards, the paucity of my share of the treat was not from any want of the good-will and affections of the people, nor on account of my heretical character.

Nevertheless, amends is made by the decidedly agreeable practice in usage, when the leave-taking is between parties of the opposite sexes. The gentleman in this case, takes the hand of the lady, and as he stoops, and gingerly or more feelingly, presses it to his lips, the lady with her lips presses his cheek or his forehead as it may be most agreeable to her. Whence this custom is derived I know not, and whether it be as general in Russia in Europe as in Siberia, my little experience and less familiar acquaintance with the ladies in the western portion of the empire, do not enable me to say.

I may perhaps appropriately mention here a little incident that occurred while I was at Irkoutsk, which afforded a proof that the cold of this desolate region has not so chilled the animal spirits of the ladies of the land, as to have left them without some touch of the

humour and gaiety common to the younger part especially of the fair sex every where else. The news happened to arrive before I left Irkoutsk, of the breaking out of the last revolution in France; and a day or two after this was known, upon calling on one of my acquaintances among the exiles, I found a party assembled, composed of the free, as well as the constrained, inhabitants of the town. On entering the room, I perceived that the whole party were fallen into a state of sadness so unlike any thing that the purely political news might be supposed to produce, that my curiosity was not a little excited concerning the cause.

The host rose slowly from a sofa upon which he had been reclining with his *chibook* in his hand, and returned my suppressed salute rather with signs than words, and handed me a chair, and then returned to his own seat. There was now a minute or two of the most absolute silence. After this, the lady of the house, rising from her seat at the opposite side of the room, advanced towards me with an open letter in her hand, which she presented to me to read, and then seated herself upon a chair beside me. Had the letter contained a copy of an order for the transportation of every one present to the mines of Nertchinsk, it is impossible that the countenance of this lady could have expressed more intelligibly her sense of the sad event. The letter was written in French; and such was the pithy character of the intelligence it contained, that, although I did not afterwards obtain a copy of it, I believe I can almost remember every word. It was dated from Paris, and appeared to be written by a nephew of M. Richie, my last travelling companion, to whom it was addressed, and ran, translated, as follows:—

"My dear Uncle,—I know not whether this will precede or follow the astonishing news which must at any

rate sooner or later reach you, of the revolution which has driven the Orleans family from the throne of France, and sent the king and M. Guizot into exile in England. But what horror will you not experience when you learn that, instead of ending like the last revolution in a mere change of dynasty and a formal charter, a new reign of terror has already commenced under the name of a republic, and similar atrocities to those that followed the first revolution, are actually in operation! Marshal Bugeaud is at this very hour sweeping the streets of Paris with his cannon, and the guillotine, now called after the author of all our misfortunes, guizotine, which has already decapitated the most illustrious of our citizens and such of the royal family as had not time to escape, is rivalling its prototype in the number of its victims, and the rapidity with which they are despatched. You will perceive, should you get this, that my handwriting is somewhat disguised, which has been done as a measure of security in case of my letter becoming opened by the police."

As I raised my eyes from this epistle, M. Richie rose from his seat, and came up to the place where I was sitting; and upon my turning the letter over to look at the post mark, he observed as he also examined this, that it must be the new republican stamp. Upon this, several of the party who had not before noticed the stamp, came up to examine it; and all agreed, that it was done by some hastily adapted instrument, but none conjectured any more. And as the silence was now broken, every one began to speculate upon the consequences of the cruelties in the act of performance at Paris, whilst scarce a remark was made concerning the consequences of the revolution itself. And strange to say, such was the perfect French style of the letter, and the cleverness with which the imitation of a stamp had

been contrived, that it was not until after two days' reflection upon the horrors disclosed, that the forgery was discovered. And it was only because it was known that there was but one hand in Irkoutsk that was capable of the performance that the young lady author of the letter was known.

CHAP. LXXXVI.

IRKOUTSK—*continued.*

A new Governor-general.—Reports of the new Governor's Character.—State into which the Administration of Affairs had fallen.—Dependence of Society upon the Chief.—Sensation caused by Accounts of the Governor's Acts on his Journey.—Terrors of the *Chinovnik.*—Governor's Arrival.—Hopes of the better Portion of the People.—Despair of the Bad.—Traveller's Visit to the Governor.—Traveller's Reception.—Palace Dinner.—Governor's Lady.—Rooms.—Company at Table.—Governor's Example of Reform in Table Extravagance.

THE most remarkable incident that the annals of Siberia may record during a period of several years, will be the arrival at Irkoutsk of General Mourovieff, who had been appointed to the government of this great province, and reached the seat of his authority at the time I had the good fortune to be there.

General Mourovieff, who is still in the prime of life, after distinguishing himself in a high command in the army of the Caucasus, was appointed to this government, and arrived upon the 14th of March of this year. And certainly, no advent of any ordinary prince to a throne ever caused more sensation among his subjects, than the new governor-general's assumption of this important government caused throughout the territory which it comprehends. The appointment had taken place some time previous to this epoch; and rumour had filled the land with various reports concerning the character of the new governor, out of which some gathered hope of relief from inconveniences that are inseparable from the condition of every one in a penal

colony, and others were plunged in despair, from the dread that greater power, which it was reported had been conferred upon the general, than that which had been hitherto enjoyed by the governors in Siberia, would be but the signal of greater license to every kind of oppressor under whom they suffered.

This portion of Siberia had been left for several years without a chief fully authorised to exercise the power indispensable to a colony of the kind, containing many settlements almost entirely composed of the refuse of the population of Russia, and embracing so vast a territory, inhabited by many distinct semi-barbarous tribes, and where the distances between the settlements are too great to admit of the intercourse necessary to obtain the objects of government through ordinary means. Thus the protection of the weak against the strong, and the administration of justice according to established laws, it will be easily conceived, had fallen into sad disorder. The *chinovnik* oppressed the peasant, and sometimes the rich, the poor; and the exiles, wherever they were far removed from the observation of the civil governor in authority at Irkoutsk, were worried in a manner which the spirit of the law never intended, and no competent authority sanctioned. Even the trading classes throughout every district of the country, felt the worst effects of the want of a fully authorised and competent head of society.

In no country, is the condition of the inhabitants more dependent upon the character of the chief administering the government than in Siberia, where the uniform is, and must be, absolute, and without question obeyed, even though worn by a sot, who is less conscious of his actions than the irrational creature that acts by the impulse of its nature alone. The character, indeed, of the lower grades of the officials had itself degenerated, on account of the relaxation of discipline attendant

upon the long-delayed appointment of the wanting chief.

A few days previous to the general's arrival, I was at an evening entertainment given by one of the richer inhabitants of the town, where a great sensation reigned, in consequence of the news of the arrival of the new governor at Krasnoyarsk. Every one was inquiring for some account that might serve to hang a conjecture upon, concerning the future policy of the expected chief; and it happened that among the reports there was one, that, if it should turn out true, was tolerably decisive upon at least one important point; and the story itself was one in which I felt especial interest. It was said, that the new governor-general had, immediately upon his arrival at the town above named, sent for the same exile in particular who has been mentioned in a previous chapter of these travels, and demanded of him, whether he had any cause of complaint, on account of the administration of the law in his case, and that he had accompanied this demand with a promise of redress, in the event of his having been subjected to any act of oppression.

Every one during the evening seemed absorbed in thought. The commercial men and speculators among the company conversed anxiously but openly. In the meantime the *chinovnik* stood apart, and with eyes fixed on the ground, or with faces turned from the gaze of any honest eye that might chance to observe them too closely, whispered every one to "his nearest mate" words that, if we might judge from the Satanic expression with which they were accompanied, were more like those of the despair of the fallen spirits awaking from their stupor in the fiery gulf, than those of good and true men.

An honest Swiss whom I had with me at this time, had occasion on the day after this important news reached

Irkoutsk, to visit the principal of the public offices, where he found, as he informed me, the utmost terror and confusion prevailing. "There's more alarm," said he, "at the report of the new governor having done, or contemplated doing, an act of justice or humanity on the road to the seat of his government, than doubtless there would be, if news had arrived that a tyrant was on his way to practise his unlicensed cruelties, and to license the oppressions of others."

At length, upon the day above mentioned, the general reached the seat of his government, and the hour of reckoning for those who had dishonoured the uniform which they wore was at hand.

The whole town was now in a perfect state of moral trepidation. My honest servant, who had a great abhorrence of the whole tribe of the demoralised classes, of whom he had seen a great deal, was full of delight at the joy to the good and the consternation to the wicked, that the arrival of the general had occasioned, and of which he gave me some animated pictures concerning what fell under his observation. Suffice it, that the first *levée* of the new governor-general quite confirmed all the hopes of the better portion of the public servants, as well as of the trading classes, and completed the despair of the evil-doers of every class in the town, and, as soon as known, of all the oppressors throughout the country.

A day or two after the general's arrival, I made a point of attending one of his excellency's ordinary *levées*. It had been my intention to request the civil governor to do me the honour of presenting me to the higher representative of their common sovereign. Not that I doubted the politeness of a Russian governor, after the experience I had had; but, as my letters from St. Petersburg were addressed to the civil governor, then the sole representative of his sovereign, I thought

it would be a less abrupt and the proper course. Some persons, however, who were conversant with what was passing in the public offices, thought it not well for me to do so while the governor-general was yet in the midst of his examinations of the proceedings and accounts of all the public servants alike, from the highest to the lowest. I therefore made my appearance at the *levée*, unaccompanied by patron, friend, or attendant.

The palace of the governor-in-chief is a huge and unsightly building of stone and brick, which had been erected by one of the millionnaires of Irkoutsk, of whom it had been bought by the government for the purpose to which it was now appropriated.

After passing the guard of honour at the entrance, and the usual doors, and the soldiers within and without, an attendant took possession of my *schouba*, cap, and upper boots, and, after leading me through an ante-room, introduced me into the hall in which the general held his *levée*. Upon entering, I found about twenty of the *chinovnik* standing stretched out in a crescent, according to custom, with their faces turned towards the door which led to the governor's inner apartment; and I took my place at the end of the curve line of expectants, which was the nearest to the door I had entered, and the furthest from that upon which all eyes were bent.

Some time passed before any footstep broke the significant silence that prevailed. In the meantime, I derived some amusement from watching the countenances of the worthy company during these moments of their fearful expectation. At every sound, whencesoever it proceeded, though no louder than that of a "mouse stirring," so plainly were marked upon the features and the attitudes of these men the varied emotions that they felt, that I doubt not that a good

physiognomist might have read the lives of every one of them as they stood thus before him. But I was content to observe the clear sign, that there was at least a conviction among them, that a vigorous government was about to relieve the oppressed, and ameliorate the condition of the people of Eastern Siberia, and perhaps to make a step towards raising the bold native races above their present estate, to partake of the advantages of civilised government.

The first indication that the moment of audience was at hand, came with the entrance of the general's aide-de-camp, who, just as he was about to speak to one of the parties present, saw another party, which his discernment at once discovered was not a Siberian *chinovnik*, if even a subject of his sovereign. The young officer now advanced towards the spot where I was standing, and addressing me very politely, inquired whether I wished to see the general; and upon being answered in the affirmative, immediately returned into the inner room.

In a short space of time, the general entered attended by the aide-de-camp, and with a soldier's freedom, when unrestrained by official ceremony, entered at once into conversation with his unexpected visitor.

I did not at present acquaint his excellency with my position as regarded my letters of protection; and what passed was merely such words of course as were applicable to the occasion, and they were not many. Nevertheless, I did not withdraw before I received a polite invitation to be a frequent visitor at the palace.

To the first of the palace dinners at which I had the honour to sit, I came by particular invitation, which was, however, sent only because I had not taken an early advantage of the custom of the country to make my appearance without giving cause for that ceremony. I had taken advantage, however, of a hint given me

with the invitation, to be early in attendance, in order to receive an introduction to, and have the opportunity of making the acquaintance of, the lady of the palace before the dinner was served, and to whom I was now formally presented.

The governor-general's wife was a native of France, but I believe of Russian extraction, and might at this time have been termed still a bride, as her marriage had been celebrated but a few months before; and the journey to Irkoutsk, though rather long for the occasion, might be considered the wedding trip.

I found the lady full of the grace and elegance still almost universal among her countrywomen, and as full of the romance of life in its bloom, as if her journey over the wastes of snow had been through such scenery as that of the southern provinces of "la belle France:" and she talked of the journeys of thousands of versts, projected by the general, whom she intended to accompany upon several expeditions during the approaching summer, just as untravelled Parisian ladies might speak of trips to Tours or Fontainebleau. The marriage, indeed—or at least it was so reported, and, as I could not doubt, very truly—was not like many celebrated at Paris, mere *à la mode*; but rather, as we term our connubial alliances, "made in heaven," or "*un mariage d'inclination*," and from which naturally follows that, whatsoever is the husband such is the wife. It needs not, therefore, be added, that the foreign guest was graciously received.

The rooms were spacious, but not extravagantly decorated; and they did not appear to contain any articles of mere luxury, with the exception of some lamps and chandeliers, for which the inhabitants of the palace were indebted to a Russian embassy to China, very much like that of Lord Amherst, and which terminated in a similar manner. The Russian ambassadors had advanced some distance into the interior of the country,

which they had entered by Kiachta, with their presents with them, of which these articles were a part, when they met the Chinese authorities appointed to conduct them to Pekin. But already the same humiliating terms were prescribed to them, to be performed in the presence of one of the representatives of the Chinese emperor, that were offered to the English ambassador, and being in the same manner refused, caused the failure of the object of the expedition, and the return of the ambassadors, who, judging that the more bulky articles which they had with them, were not worth carrying back to St. Petersburg, left them for the benefit of the future occupants of this palace, where they remain a monument of the historical event which brought them to Siberia.

The dinner party consisted of about twenty guests, composed, in the main, of the superior class of the *chinovnik*, and was necessarily somewhat formal. There was but one lady among the guests,—the mistress of the public school above mentioned for the young ladies of Irkoutsk, whom I had before met at the civil governor's. This lady sat on one side of the noble hostess, while myself sat on the other; and as no one near us knew any language but the Russian, and our hostess had not yet made more progress than myself in the tongue of the land, and the general was too distant to afford us the benefit of his conversation, we made a little party for the time apart.

If there be any thing in the ordinary intercourse of society, of equal interest to the conversation of a young wife still full of the warmth of sentiment proper to youth, just freed from the restraint prescribed by propriety to the unprotected or inexperienced girl, I have not met with, or have not been able to appreciate it. But it was now with augmented pleasure that I felt that the inhabitants of the country in whose affairs

I began at this time to take much interest, would have an example of the family life, as well as of refinement, at the head of society in their capital, that could not fail to produce many substantial benefits to the whole community.

In other respects, the dinner-party at the palace offered but one novelty, which was at once an example of moral interest set to the company present, and one of the evidences of the determination of the governor-general to lay the axe to the very root of the tree of evil that had poisoned the land with its pestiferous fruits. It consisted in the substitution of a kind of wine made of the wild cherries of the country, for the champagne and burgundy at the prodigal tables of the millionnaires, though not to the entire exclusion of those finer or more esteemed because more expensive wines.

Nothing can be wholesomer, and nothing of more delicate flavour, than this Siberian beverage. It was now indeed the first time that I tasted it; but I never afterwards drank any other wine in the country, when it was to be had, though in truth, it must be confessed, this was of very rare occurrence. The dinner ended like all other dinners at all times in that country, by the guests saluting the patron saint, as well as the host and hostess; after which, a cup of coffee in another apartment completed the entertainment.

CHAP. XXXVII.

IRKOUTSK—*continued.*

Condition of the Exiles.—The Survivors of the Political Exiles of the last Insurrection in Russia.—The Treatment during different Periods of their Exile.—Final Settlement.—Condition since that Epoch.—Their Wives and Property.—Their Relation in Society to the Criminal Exiles.—The Ladies' Feelings.—Their Friends.—Their Absence at Public Balls.—Not excluded from the Government-house.—Treatment of their Sons.—Sufferings during Scarcity.—Increase of Allowance.—Arrival of an old Servant of one of the Ladies.—English Composition by a young Lady.—Critique on Russian Authors.—Meteorological Journal.

It is now incumbent to offer a few more remarks upon the character and condition of the exiles who comprise a considerable proportion of the population of the capital of Eastern Siberia; and they will be made with perfect confidence in the genuineness of the sources of information from which they are derived. But as nothing is concealed from the stranger, and nothing done in secret in Siberia, all who feel sufficient interest in the subject may, through the most regular channels, inform themselves concerning every thing which regards both the law, and the manner in which it is administered in this country. They may, indeed, learn every particular that relates to the condition of every class of exiles, from the former aspirant to sovereign rule, down to the *prolétaire*, and the most petty criminals, of whom there are many who have actually committed offences for the very purpose of getting sent, at the government charge, from a state of bondage to enjoy the freedom of Russian subjects in Siberia.

It will be remembered, that while we had the picture of the society of Tomsk open before us, the opportunity was taken to expose the character and condition of the criminal exiles in particular with which that town and district abound. As in Irkoutsk, however, the proportion of those who suffer for state offences is much greater than at Tomsk, it is chiefly of what are called the political exiles that we must now speak.

In this town, among others, are assembled the chief part of the survivors of those who were the leaders, or who were otherwise compromised, in the last great attempt to overthrow the government. They were condemned to labour for life in the mines of Nertchinsk; but into these abodes of the worst criminals which the empire in Asia can furnish, they never descended. The labour which they performed for some time, consisted, for the most part, in various occupations, which were not rigorously enforced, the chief of which was, grinding corn in large hand-mills. They were nevertheless confined in a prison which was at first windowless, and gloomy, and wretched, though it did not long so remain. It happened, and it reflects indelible honour upon the women of Russia, that the wives of nearly all those who were so fortunate as to have them, followed the fortunes of their husbands; and their first act after their arrival was, to petition the imperial government, that there might be windows pierced in the prison, and that a few comforts, which their husbands were then without, might be conceded; and the prayer of their petition was granted.

For the remaining portion of two years, these exiles continued daily employed at the work above mentioned, under a superintendence so mild, that no more labour was exacted from them, than they themselves found it convenient to perform, and which was indeed necessary, in the words of one of the principal

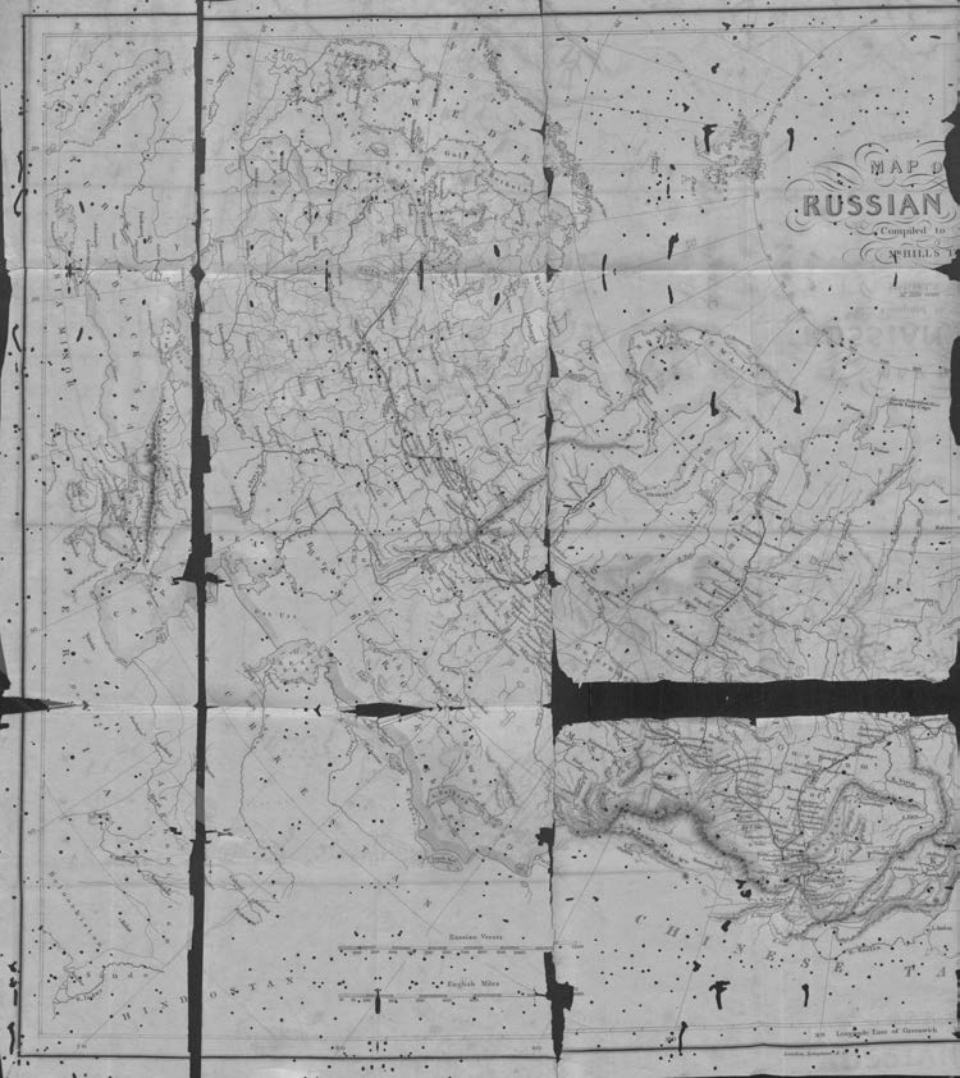
among them, "to relieve the weariness of the time, and gain them appetites."

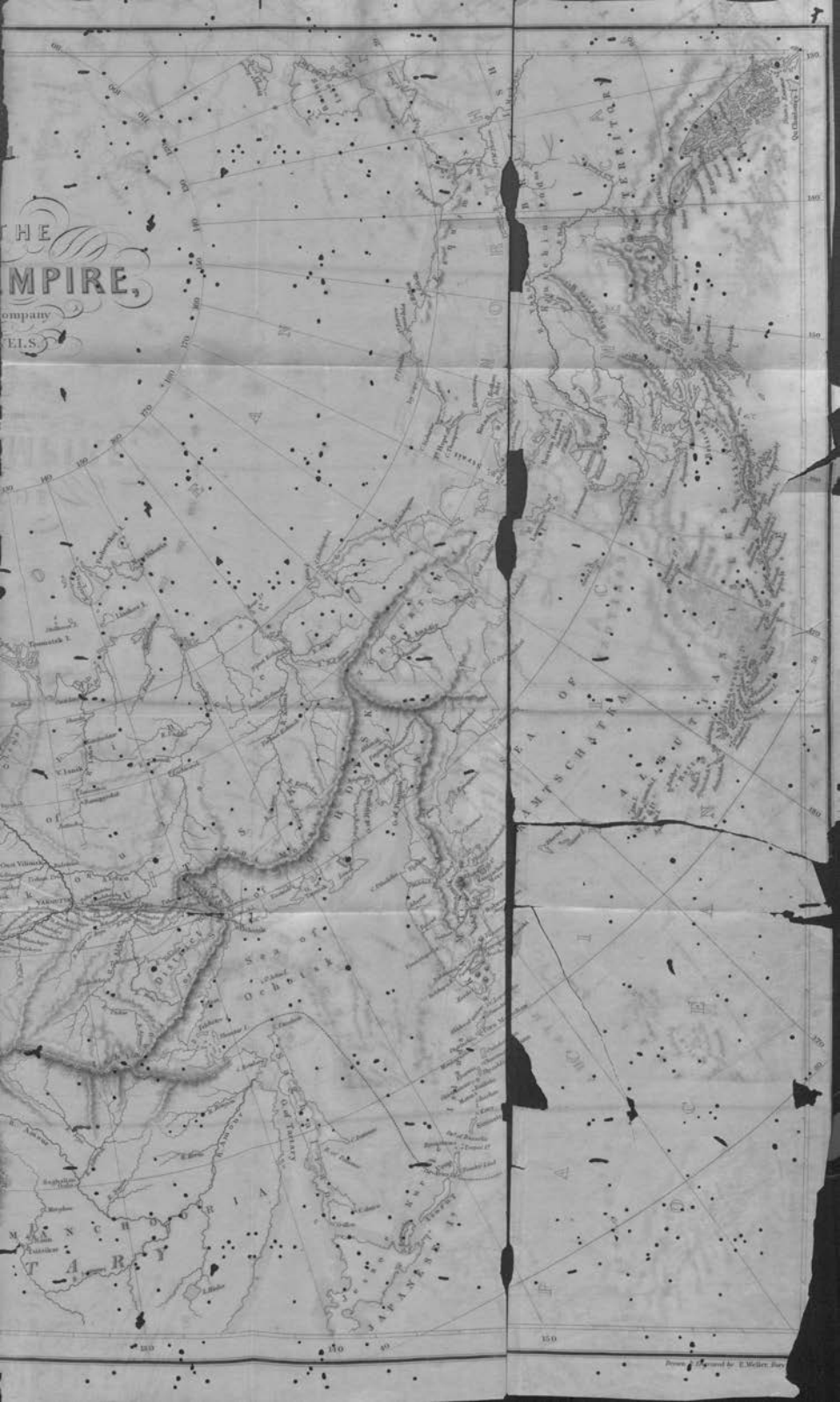
At the end of this period they were released from prison, and permitted to live in the villages in the vicinity, where most of them resided for three years. After this, a third step in the amelioration of their condition was made, in giving them permission to choose any village within the same government, in which they would prefer to settle as colonists. They generally chose such of those as were not far distant from the capital, and they now engaged in the cultivation of the land. But finally, at the end of five or seven years at the farthest, they were, if they thought proper, allowed to settle in this or any other town, according to their inclination. From this time they have been subjected to no other restraint than the interdiction from changing the places of residence which they chose, and in the prohibition from practising any art, or carrying on any branch of commerce.

Those who had no more than the government allowance for their support, generally continued still to cultivate the land in the villages; while others, whose friends in Russia sent them relief, which was always permitted to the extent of a thousand rubles a year in money, with any quantity of necessaries or luxuries, lived in a comfortable condition in this and other towns. Some of those who reside here, are indebted to the good fortune of their wives having possessed separate property, which was not confiscated or transferred to other hands. This indeed has placed them in a position in which their example, had its effects not been counteracted by the consequences of the excessive riches since drawn from the mines, would have tended to raise the Siberian character, and contributed to the general advance and refinement of the inhabitants of the country.

The relative moral or social position of these exiles

in regard to the free inhabitants of the country, has generally depended in a great measure upon the manner in which the law has been interpreted or administered. I made very frequent visits to several of their houses during the time of my sojourn at this town; and I was accustomed to meet there, officials, merchants, and mining proprietors, and others among the respectable inhabitants of Irkoutsk, and I do not believe any one was restrained from visiting them by the police, or abstained from so doing from the fear of being suspected of disaffection towards the government. But I must mention that it happened, that a few weeks previous to the remarkable event mentioned in the last chapter, most of their friends ceased to visit them. This, however, was justly attributed to the fear of a change of policy with the change of the representative of the sovereign. During this time, nevertheless, I continued to see them as usual, and was witness to the effects which this apparent falling off of their friends produced. The remarks that were made, indeed, were but few, and alluded merely to the feelings natural to what recalls the past, and reminds us of the reality of the ills of life, and the sometimes irreparable consequences of a single act. One of the ladies said to me, when depressed in spirits by missing the visits which she had been accustomed to receive: "We cannot blame our friends that they have forsaken us, when we consider our position." The youthful days of this lady had been spent in England, and her holidays, I believe, when at school, at Warwick Castle. Faint as may be the descriptions herein given of this dreary region by one not subjected to the restraints which depress our spirits and magnify our ills, yet, after what has been said on this subject, the change from the ever fresh and fair scenes of Warwickshire to the dreary wastes of this sterile land may be very well imagined.


MAP
RUSSIAN
Compiled to
PHILLS
Russian Versts
English Miles
CHINESE
Longitude East of Greenwich


THE
MPIRE,
ompany
ELS.
SEA OF KAMTSCHATKA
Sea of Ochotsk
Yakutsk
Okotsk
Tamatai I.
Matsmai
Kamtschatka
Behring's I.
Copper I.
Attoo I.
Onalaska
Unalaska
Kodiak I.
Prince William's Sound
Cook's River
Mount St. Elias
Mount Fairweather
Queen Charlotte's I.
Nootka Sound
Juan de Fuca Strait
Columbia R.
Vancouver's I.
Gulf of Georgia
Gulf of Tartary
Japan
Niphon

Another lady, whose reflections, when I conversed with her on several occasions, had in a more lively manner been turned towards "times long past, but still with woe remembered," led me into a less frequented apartment than that in which we had been sitting, and, when she had directed my attention to several portraits of her own and her husband's ancestors, which hung upon the walls, she said in an accent at once of resignation and melancholy, and speaking English, in which language she always conversed with me, "Behold all that remains of our former glory." These were the most complaining, as well as impressive words that I heard uttered in sad and direct allusion to the state of things long past, during the whole time of my stay in Irkoutsk.

But upon the reception of the news of the governor-general having had an interview with the exile of Krasnoyarsk, which caused so much alarm among the *chinovnik*, there was a grand press again by the former visitors towards the houses of the principal exiles; and all now already went on again much the same as before.

After the new governor's arrival, every thing wore an air of more gaiety and more confidence than ever; and often I heard several of the exiles, with whom I was well acquainted, say, that the sole penalty they now suffered, consisted in the restraint upon their return into Russia.

At public balls, of which there were two while I was at Irkoutsk, they did not attend, though I do not believe their absence arose from any other cause than the respect which they felt for the general loyal feelings of the people, which might perhaps in some particular instance be carried to a degree that would inconvenience them. Yet I met several of them on different occasions at the tea-hour, as well as in the morning, at the governor-general's, when measures

were discussed that were under consideration for the improvement and advance of the country; and I could not help remarking with what eagerness the soldier from the Caucasus sought information through the best channels that it might be obtained, to aid the grand object of his mission in Siberia. I also met frequently at the houses of the same exiles, both the governor-general's private secretary, Gospodin Struve, and his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Moltchanoff, two young men of energy of character and abilities, and both of whom were interesting themselves in the welfare of the country. Mr. Struve is the son of the astronomer royal of Russia. The aide-de-camp, I have since heard, afterwards married the only daughter of one of the ladies to whom I have made particular allusion. This same lady, I may take the opportunity to mention, had a son also, at this time about to finish his studies at the gymnasium, and who, as I have been since informed, has now a commission in the regular army, and is attached to the corps at present at Irkoutsk.

The period at which the exiles generally, experienced the greatest sufferings, was at the beginning of the present great mining speculations. At this time, the prices of every necessary augmented so much, that they were unable to procure the comforts to which they had been accustomed. But upon the representation of this at St. Petersburg, their allowance was increased in proportion to the augmentation of prices, which enabled them to resume the way of life which they had been obliged for a season to forego.

A little circumstance occurred at the house of one of the ladies above alluded to, while I was at Irkoutsk, which, as having some relation to our present subject, I cannot pass over. A party of criminal exiles arrived from Russia, among whom there was a woman a little stricken in years, who asked immediately, upon reaching the

town, for permission to be allowed to make a visit to this house. Her request being granted, she came and obtained entrance, and rushing into the room where the lady of the house was sitting in company with several other persons, threw herself upon the ground before her, and after kissing her feet and embracing her knees, while still kneeling, made herself known as one of the domestic serfs of the lady's family in the time of their younger days. This poor woman had spent the whole of twenty-one years that had intervened from the time of the voluntary exile of her then young mistress, in endeavours to procure permission to follow her into Siberia; and, finally, despairing of this, she had set off on her journey towards the country she sighed to reach, alone and on foot, in the hope that she might be taken up, as the custom is, and classed among the *prolétaires*, or vagabonds without pretension to any lawful occupation, and sent at the government charge to the very country to which she desired to go; and her expectation was very soon fulfilled. Nevertheless, her proper penal journey was ended at Tobolsk, where those who are condemned for the lighter offences are still sometimes sent, and which it happened had been designed for her resting-place. But not having, upon her arrival there, obtained her object or made half her journey, she petitioned the authorities that she might be sent further into the country; and the policy of the government being to settle Eastern Siberia in particular, no difficulty stood in the way of this. Thus, after a two years' march from the time she commenced her first journey, she arrived, and now found a happy home in the bosom of the once tender child of whom she had had the care in the time of her own youth.

I shall close these several remarks concerning the exiles, by the introduction of an exact copy of a little

piece of English composition, written by the daughter of one of the anciently noble ladies now residing in this town. I am persuaded that it will be perused with interest; and it will at the same time tend to confirm what has been said of the state of society and of education at the capital of Eastern Siberia. It is first necessary, however, in order to its just appreciation, to state precisely what it arose from, and what it was intended for. It might otherwise be supposed to pretend to more than ever entered into the head of the fair writer to conceive.

While I was at Irkoutsk, this young lady had done me the favour to read English with me occasionally, for the benefit of having her accent, which was all but perfectly pure, still corrected; and as one favour generally begets a fancied claim to another, I begged of her, when I was about to depart, that she would write for me, something from her own unaided thoughts in my native language, upon any subject that was agreeable to her, that I might keep this as a memorial of herself and her family; and the little account of the Russian authors which follows, she sent to me by her papa on the eve of my departure.

"PRINCIPAL OF THE RUSSIAN POETS AND WRITERS OF THESE LAST YEARS."

"PUSHKIN, the most correct and elegant of the Russian poets. The best of his original poems are *The Fountains of Bakchisary*; *The Prisoner of Caucasus*, *Boris Godounoff*, a tragedy; *The Battle of Poltava*, a great poem; *Cuslan and Ludonila*, a tale; *Eogueni Onéguin*, a kind of imitation of Lord Byron's *Don Juan*.

"PUSHKIN has also written the *History of Pugatchoff's Rebellion*, and many tales in prose. He died in the year 1838, having been killed in a duel.

"KRILOFF, a fabulist. The Russian public are very fond of his fables, that are written in a style simple and correct, and appropriated to the national taste, which is more inclined to satire than apologue. He died some six or five years ago, very old.

"THORAMZINA, author of the *History of Russia*. Death did not allow him to bring it farther than the year 1612.

"LERMANTOFF has written a great deal of small poetry, and some tales in prose. The scene of his action is most part on the Caucasus, where he was killed in a duel some years ago.

"MARLINSKY, whose proper name is ALEXANDER BESTUJEFF, wrote many tales and novels in prose. His style is somewhat turgid; *Analot Bek* and *Mulla Nuhr* are the last of his works, the heroes of these two novels are Caucasian highlanders. He was killed in the year 1839, on the shores of the Black Sea, by the Circassians.

"JUKOVSKY, sweet and elegant poet; but most of his poems are translations from German and English poets.

"KUKOLNIK, author of many tragedies.

"KHOMIAKÓFF has written small poetry.

Countess Rostopchin is making a fine use of her pen in verse and prose.

"Gogal and Dahl are tale writers much valued by the public, especially the first of them. Count Solagub can be added to them.

"At the head of the journalists, we must place Nicholay Coleray, who died some years ago.

"During many years he has published a monthly review under the name of *Telegraph of Moscow*. He wrote also the *History of the Russian People*, in opposition to Karomzia, who entitled his own, *History of the Russian State*. Different tales and comedies of his own, and translations from Shakespeare and German dramatists, made his name renowned in the Russian literature. He died four or five years ago.

"The present journalists, Kraievsky, Senkousky, Pletniff, are publishers of monthly reviews. Greteb and Bulgarin are publishing the *Northern Bee*, a daily paper, which has nothing remarkable in it."

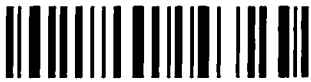
METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL KEPT AT IRKOUTSK BY A RUSSIAN GENTLEMAN, FROM DECEMBER THE 1ST, 1847, TO MAY THE 5TH, 1848.

Number of degrees of Réaumur at sunrise, and remarks.

Date.	Degrees.	State of the Weather.
December 1	—22	
2	—24	
3	—26½	
4	—21	
5	—22	
6	—25½	
7	—22	
8	—15	Cloudy.
9	—22	Storm.
10	—32	Sunshine.
11	—26	
12	—16	Snow.
13	—11	Storm.
14	—20	
15	—19½	
16	—21	Nebulous.
17	—15	Snow.
18	—15	
19	—16½	Storm.
20	—26	Snow.
21	—16	
22	—14	
23	—12	Windy.
24	—16	Storm.
25	—19	Snow-storm.
26	—15	Storm.
27	—14	Snow.
28	—18	Sunshine.
29	—27	
30	—23	
31	—21	
1848 January 1	—24	
2	—16	Snow and Wind.
3	—15½	Sunshine.
4	—19	Cloudy.
5	—17½	Snow.
6	—21	Sunshine.

METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL—*continued.*

Date.		Degrees.	State of the Weather.
January	7	—30½	
	8	—28	
	9	—31¾	
	10	—33¼	
	11	—22½	Sunshine.
	12	—30	
	13	—28	
	14	—40	Fog in the morning, and Sunshine afterwards.
	15	—38	
	16	—35	
	17	—25	Sun and Wind.
	18	—23	Ditto.
	19	—25	Sunshine.
	20	—22	
	21	—24	
	22	—16	
	23	—16½	Snow.
	24	—23	Ditto.
	25	—16	Sunshine.
	26	—16½	Nebulous.
	27	—21½	Sunshine.
	28	—15	
	29	—20	
	30	—21	
	31	—23½	
February	1	—11	Wind, Nebulous.
	2	—25	Ditto and Sun.
	3	—29	Sunshine.
	4	—23	
	5	—23	
	6	—21	
	7	—22	Wind and Nebulous.
	8	—21	
	9	—16	Cloudy.
	10	—12	Snow.
	11	—22	Sunshine.
	12	—13	Snow.
	13	—13	
	14	—17	Wind, Sunshine.
	15	—13	Cloudy.
	16	—12	Sunshine.
	17	—10	Nebulous.
	18	— 8	Snow.
	19	—11	Sunshine.
	20	—18	
	21	—17	Cloudy.
	22	—20	Sunshine.
	23	—19	
	24	—20	


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